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metroNEWS

Gay-straight alliance debate causing 'anxiety'

EDUCATION

**Right-wing divide
leaves LGBTQ
students in middle**



**Kevin
Maimann**
Metro | Edmonton

Alberta Opposition Wildrose leader Brian Jean took to Facebook Wednesday to insist he still believes parents should not be notified if their kid joins a gay-straight alliance.

Jean faced criticism after a Calgary Sun column published online Tuesday night said he had reversed his position.

Jean said a communications mix-up is to blame, and he still believes that students — and not school officials — should get the final say on when and if parents are told about the child joining a gay-straight alliance.

"I haven't changed my mind. Nothing has changed," said Jean. "Under no circumstance should a child be compelled to discuss sexual identity with

anyone before they are ready."

Last week, newly elected Progressive Conservative Leader Jason Kenney said he believes that parents should be told if their child, gay or straight, joins a GSA unless the school believed doing so would cause harm to the child.

Jean said Monday that he disagreed with Kenney.

Ric McIver, the leader of the PCs in the house, refused repeatedly to say Monday whether he believes parents should be told. The debate is causing anxiety in some people who actually belong to GSAs, according to an Edmonton high school student who spoke with Metro Wednesday.

"All of this is just unfortunate, because this information does make its way to LGBTQ students," said Dylan Chevalier, the 18-year-old president of Ross Sheppard's GSA.

"A lot of them are too busy worrying about their own lives to really pay attention to the media, so they get these snippets, and it does cause anxiety and fear and it can make a place such as a GSA feel unsafe for them."

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HEALTH

Flu vaccine worked 60 per cent of time



Elizabeth Cameron
For Metro | Calgary

Alberta got lucky this flu season.

Research from the University of Calgary shows this year's influenza vaccine was successful 60 per cent of the time.

"We had an early peak of the season, and the vaccine worked really well," said Dr. James Dickinson, professor of family medicine and community health sciences at the university.

"If we can get it over 50 per cent we're doing quite well. Our goal is 100 per cent, but at the moment, that's not possible because we don't have another way to make the vaccines," he told Metro.

The World Health Organization decides which strains of influenza should be included in vaccines each year, but Dickinson said it's always difficult to predict what will show up.

This year, the dominant strain was H3N2 — a particularly difficult one to fight, according to Dickinson, who said



There were 53 deaths in the province related to influenza this season, according to AHS. THE CANADIAN PRESS FILE

the rest of the country didn't fare as well as Alberta.

"Some (provinces) were at 40 per cent, some were at 20 per cent," he said.

"Influenza is a wily and variable virus, it frequently changes in unpredictable ways. It might be because they had different strains of the virus."

Across the province, a total of 1,155,572 doses of the vaccine were recorded between August and March of this year.

Police investigations ready to go off-road

POLICING

Service looking for 'adventure-motorcycles'



Lucie Edwardson
Metro | Calgary

Calgary police are taking it off-road.

In a request for purchase put out by the city, the Calgary Police Service is looking for six new "adventure-model motorcycles."

Insp. Ken Thrower said they acquired four of the bikes last year, and like them so much they've decided to build their adventure-model motorcycle brigade to 10.

"When you say adventure there are a couple things that come to mind, but why we're looking at it is because they're considered the SUV of motorcycles," he said.

Thrower said an SUV has four-



Calgary police will be adding six adventure-model motorcycles to their fleet of 15 Harley Davidson motorcycles. METRO FILE

wheel drive and can hypothetically go off-roading, much like with the adventure bikes.

Currently, Calgary police also have 15 Harley Davidson bikes, which Thrower said "serve their purpose very well," but he said there are many benefits to adding more adventure-style bikes to their fleet.

"What we looked at here is that we can store more equipment, we can lock down the helmets, we can put radar in its complete case — it's more versatile," he said.

Thrower said the Harley Davidson bikes are quite heavy (around 900 pounds) and the

adventure bikes weigh half that — maybe. The inspector said the lighter model bikes will allow Calgary police to take the bikes off city roads, and add to the force's capacity to respond to calls.

"We do get a lot of calls for missing persons and with these bikes we will go into parks and laneways looking for them," he said, adding the bikes can handle gravel, dirt roads, hop curbs and be driven through parks and grass.

During events like the 2013 floods, Thrower said they weren't able to take their Harley bikes through the water —

another advantage to adding more adventure-model bikes.

Thrower said adding different kinds of motorcycles to the fleet is no different than what they did with their police car fleet by adding SUVs and trucks.

"This is just a version in motorcycles that adds capacity for us to get to certain locations and still do the same function as the Harleys," he said.

For the foreseeable future Thrower said CPS will have a split of the two and then determine down the line if they'll go to one style over the other.

The request for purchase closes April 19.

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Mock bid shows serious strategy

OLYMPICS

Students pitch 2026 Games for city using 'inspired' ideas



Helen Pike
Metro | Calgary

There's already been an Olympic bid for 2026 in Calgary, it assumes a new stadium is already built, and centres around the West Village.

But this bid wasn't a city affair. It was built around the tireless work of 27 students in the Facility and Event Management class at Mount Royal University.

On Wednesday, in front of a stakeholder-studded crowd, the mock Olympic Bid Committee launched into their bid presentation, centred around sustainability and inclusiveness.

"Our bid book is a condensed version of other bid books," said student Tyler Delannoy. "We really just scratched the surface of it. We're presenting a lot of really creative ideas."

These include turning the

Nordic Centre into an Olympic Village, a new venue for the ski jump and assuming CalgaryNEXT will be constructed in the city's West Village.

"For an Olympic bid, if there was one that would go through, I think it would really support the CalgaryNEXT project being completed," Delannoy said. "It would be a great facility for the Olympic Games and it would be a great facility after the Olympics as well, just in the trend of sustainability."

Students had presenters discuss the anatomy of a bid from each possible angle, including Ken King, who told them the current state of the Saddledome, how it would need to be upgraded and, of course, the CalgaryNEXT pitch.

Delannoy hopes Calgary Bid Exploration Committee (CBEC) members, some who attended the presentation, will consider their plan.

Among the judges eyeing the mock bid was two-time gold medal speed skater Catriona Le May Doan.

She said people are seeing the games as complex, contributing to transit, arts and culture.

"What was done back in the '80s was not necessarily sustainable, but we as a community should be proud because we're the only winter city that uses every single Olympic facility."

She said it's huge to have names like Frank King, the force behind the 1988 Olympics, watching as the MRU students. As part of the CBEC board she's excited for the conversation that she called "inspired."

Behind the class is Prof. David Legg who has had six iterations of a similarly modelled course for events like the 2022 Olympic and Paralympic games, the X Games and Commonwealth Games.

He said this time students have really been able to hang their hat on the momentum of the city's own look at hosting the Olympics again.

"This year it took on a very different feel," said Legg. "I told them 'This could be the start of your career.'"



I told them 'This could be the start of your career.' David Legg



Recapturing this spirit — the excitement of the 1988 Winter Olympic in Calgary — Mount Royal University students made the case for a 2026 edition of the Games in the city, but focused on the need for sustainability and inclusiveness. JONATHAN UTZ/AFP/GETTY IMAGES

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Siksika Nation councillors Carlin Black Rabbit and Rueben "Buck" Breaker, are working on the new bylaws. CONTRIBUTED

Drug traffickers face being banished

CRIME

Siksika Nation takes action, and Mounties say it works



Elizabeth
Cameron
For Metro | Calgary

Dealers beware: those bringing or distributing illicit substances onto the Siksika Nation could soon be subject to banishment as consequence for their crimes.

A new task force dedicated to preventing drug-related crime on the First Nation is in the process of developing several bylaws to reduce the flow of crystal meth and cocaine onto the reserve, located one hour east of Calgary.

"The drug dealers need to know we're not going to fool around. They're out here ruining lives, well, we're out here to try and save lives," said Councillor Reuben "Buck" Breaker, who

chairs the Siksika Crime Prevention Team (SCPT).

After the Nation's recent election, Chief Joe Weasel Child met with his council to discuss their priorities for the next three years.

"Right from the get-go, one thing we were looking at was the drug problem and crime associated with it," Weasel Child said. "These drugs are driving our families apart."

Breaker said paperwork for the new bylaws is already in their lawyer's hands.

"We'll have a residency bylaw — if a Nation member is selling out of a band home, there will be an eviction bylaw that will be enforced," said Breaker.

He said offenders will be given the chance to return, depending on their willingness to abide by the Nation's terms.

"We don't want to be a punishing leadership, we want to work with them and give them the opportunity to heal," said Breaker. "If they reoffend, the longer the term."

One of the task force's first

"The drug dealers need to know we're not going to fool around."

Rueben "Buck" Breaker

initiatives was to create a process for Nation members to report dealers — on-reserve or not — anonymously.

Most of the illicit drugs are brought in by non-Nation members, according to Breaker, who provided a recent bust in the nearby town of Gleichen as an example.

After a Nation member reported a drug trafficking operation at a residence in the town, local RCMP were able to obtain a search warrant and made a significant bust.

"It's still before the courts, but even what's happened so far makes a meaningful impact on the ability and availability of

drug trafficking in Siksika, when you can take down a significant person like this," said Sgt. Tyler Codling with Gleichen RCMP.

"The task force is doing an excellent job encouraging citizens of Siksika to come forward and provide information ... confidential informants are the best tool we have," Codling said.

Aside from interrupting the flow of illicit drugs onto the reserve, Weasel Child said the team's key objective is to address the root causes behind substance abuse in the community.

"It's not just simply finding out who's bringing in the drugs and putting that person in jail, it's addressing everything else that comes with that problem," the chief said.

Breaker said the SCPT is focusing on community wellness by working with other areas such as health, children's services, justice and education.

"It's up to us to have programs, people, and services available to help and get to the root of the problem," he said.

TECHNOLOGY

Silicon Valley eyeing city's engineering talent



Brodie
Thomas
Metro | Calgary

Calgary isn't the only city trying to lure Silicon Valley talent away to other jurisdictions, but the province does have an edge according to Calgary

Economic Development CEO Mary Moran.

"Particularly now, with the executive order that President Trump put out — there are a lot of other jurisdictions in here," said Moran. "Some (companies) are getting four pitches a week from other jurisdictions."

Moran was in San Francisco

and Silicon Valley on Monday and Tuesday of this week, along with Calgary Mayor Naheed Nenshi and provincial Economic Trade and Development Minister Deron Bilous, trying to compete for a piece of the tech pie.

She said having a minister and a mayor on the ground

showed a level of commitment that other cities might not demonstrate so early in the process.

The three were able to meet with about 12 companies over the course of two days.

One business is very close to setting up a satellite office in Calgary, according to Moran.

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Red Mile ramps up as Flames prepare for playoffs

Bars, restaurants and residents of 17th Avenue are pumped for the upcoming Flames playoff run and the party-like atmosphere on the Red Mile...for the most part

LUCIE EDWARDSON FOR METRO



Adam Boudreault, manager of Home and Away, says they're expecting packed crowds. JENNIFER FRIESEN/METRO

HOME AND AWAY SPORTS BAR

This is the first Flames playoff run for Home and Away sports bar — which has been packed full for every Flames game since late February, according to manager Adam Boudreault.

In preparation for the playoffs Boudreault said they've already had a little practice with major events like the Toronto Raptors playoffs and the Jays' playoff run.

"We've been in playoff mode for the majority of the year already," he said.

Further, Boudreault said they've been in touch with

Calgary police about the inevitable increase in parties along the Red Mile once playoffs kick off, and have a dedicated point person to deal with any "riff-raff" or incidents.

"Obviously that comes with the territory," he said. "I like to think we're pretty well prepared for it."

Boudreault said Home and Away staff and clientele are looking forward to the excitement of the playoffs, and added that they will have some homerun food and beverage deals throughout the playoff run.



Adam Gabrieau says staff are looking forward having fun with Flames fans. JENNIFER FRIESEN/METRO

THE BIG CHEESE POUTINERIE

Having already witnessed the hype of the playoffs and the Red Mile magic last go-around in 2015, Big Cheese manager Adam Gabrieau said they're not worried at all — but looking forward to the excitement and influx of people.

"I remember it very clearly being an insanely big party all over 17th Avenue, especially the night we eliminated the Canucks," he said. "Pretty much everyone being in a great mood. Everyone was actually better behaved then on a regular Friday or Saturday night."

Gabrieau said they're look-

ing forward to a boost in business, too — he said in 2015 during the playoffs they stayed busy and open for an hour after they usually close.

"Definitely looking forward to a boost in business, especially with Trolley 5 right next to us where Melrose used to be," he said. "We always heard Melrose was kind of the hub, so we're hoping it brings a lot of people next door to us."

"I'm looking forward to going all in, getting involved with the Flames fans celebrating and having fun with our customers that way."



Ellen Sparling says she's excited for the Red Mile festivities — even if she does lose a little sleep. LUCIE EDWARDSON/METRO

NEIGHBOURHOOD RESIDENT

The buzz and energy created by a Flames playoff run is something Ellen Sparling, who lives just off 17th Avenue, remembers about the 2015 playoff run. It's also what she's most excited for this year.

"I would rather have the Red Mile than not because it just brings such a good energy to the city," she said.

Sparling admits that there are generally more "belligerently drunk" people than there usually is, but in her experience the Red Mile parties have been "in really good spirits and respectful."

She said Calgary police are to

be commended for that.

"The police did a really good job of blocking off the streets as well, they covered a lot of the corners and seemed super prepared, it's not like I ever felt unsafe," she said.

The one thing Sparling isn't exactly psyched about is the noise.

"Part of me is gritting my teeth knowing I might not be able to get to sleep at a good time when people are partying," she said. "It gets pretty crazy, but more than the noise from people I find the cars honking to be annoying."

PUBLIC SPACE

17th Ave construction to start this month



Jennifer Friesen
For Metro | Calgary

Years after the hypothetical wrecking ball got rolling, the city is ready to start construction on 17th Avenue on April 17.

The \$44-million project will completely overhaul the strip from Macleod Trail S.E. to 14 St. S.W., and the process could now take up to four years, according to project manager Logan Tolsman.

"We've taken a step back

and worked with (the business-owners) over the last little while to make our schedule better," he continued.

"What that's resulted in is going from a two-year construction schedule to at least three, and it's resulted in fewer construction zones and shorter construction zones."

Construction will move block-by-block down the road, with full road closures for each affected block, but pedestrians will still have full access to the walkways and businesses.

"We want to make sure that the customer-base is not impinged in any way," said Martin Halliday, board member of 17th Avenue BRZ.

"We've been working on this with the city for about a year. It's really important to us to keep the vitality of 17th Avenue going."

The construction includes rebuilding sidewalks, adding crosswalks, designing new traffic lanes and upgrading the underground utilities — some of which are more than 100 years old.

Construction fencing will be set up from Macleod Trail to 1 St. S.E. late next week, and that first block is expected to be completed by September.

Halliday said the BRZ is still working on compromises with the city, adding that he hopes they can get some funding for events to keep the area alive, but concluded that he thinks it'll be worth it in the end.

"Everybody's hopeful," he said. "It's going to be a long process, but I think we can get through it and it will work out OK."



Ernie Tsu and Mallory Moser of Trolley 5 restaurant and brewery inspect plans at a public engagement session. JENNIFER FRIESEN/FOR METRO



Abdelhalim Abdallah joined the protest at city hall Wednesday following chemical attacks in Syria. JENNIFER FRIESEN/FOR METRO

Protesters plead for federal aid

SYRIA

Demonstrators call on UN to investigate Syrian president



Jennifer Friesen
For Metro | Calgary

Amidst chants, tears and silent prayers seen muttered on the lips of men and women, a crowd of nearly 100 gathered at city hall on Wednesday.

The impromptu protest was held in response to Tuesday's chemical weapons attack in the town of Khan Sheikhoun, Syria, which killed at least 72 civilians, including children.

Saima Jamal stood at the crowd's helm and said that the group was gathered for four reasons: to implore the Canadian government to respond to the attack, to spread awareness, to share ways to help the victims and to show solidarity.

"It's just shaken us to the core," said Jamal. "We thought

by now we'd be completely desensitized by what is happening in Syria, but then these fresh images of young, naked children getting hosed down and choking to death — it woke all of us up again."

Monaf Alaqa, 21, arrived in Canada last year as a Syrian refugee. He still has family left back home and joined Wednesday's protest in the hopes that more people will see the photos of the attack's aftermath and pray for those affected.

"It's breaking my heart," he said. "If anyone can help, if the government can help these people, maybe more can be saved."

Jamal said the use of chemical warfare is a "huge red line," and is asking the Canadian government to put pressure on the United Nations to bring Syrian President Bashar al-Assad to a war crime tribunal.

"We want some sort of awakening for our government," she continued. "They have helped a lot of Syrians here, but please don't forget about the Syrians still in Syria. They are still very much helpless."

If the government can help these people, maybe more can be saved.

Monaf Alaqa

CITY PLANNING

Indigenous policy 'groundbreaking': Councillor



Elizabeth Cameron
For Metro | Calgary

The City of Calgary's reconciliation and engagement with the Treaty 7 Nations is about to become an official part of policy.

A draft of the first Indigenous Policy was presented to the city by the Calgary Aboriginal Urban Affairs Committee on Wednesday.

"This policy ... recognizes we

are the newcomers. We've only been here for 150 years, but our Indigenous peoples have been here for thousands and thousands of years," said Ward 11 Coun. Brian Pincott.

A final draft of the policy will be submitted to council for final approval in the next couple of weeks. Then, it's a matter of finding ways for each city department to work with Indigenous groups and involve them in decision-making processes regarding city matters and cultural sites.

"As a community, we have to include the Indigenous people of Calgary, of Moh'kinsstis, the area, in our decision-making process," said Pincott. "We tie ourselves in knots trying to save a 100-year-old building, but we don't think twice about removing an 8,000 year old archeological site. They're both as important."

Informed by Traditional Knowledge Keepers from the Treaty 7 Nations, the policy will increase the city's engagement with Indigenous peoples regarding pro-

jects on the traditional lands of their ancestors from a cultural and historical perspective.

Pincott called the policy "groundbreaking," but said the real change is yet to come.

"I think the next steps are really important," Pincott said.

"We've got to change our attitude around seeing the Indigenous population in Calgary as people we have to do things for, and start seeing them as the partners and the asset that they are," he said.

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LONDON DRUGS

MRU's new tech lab melds psychology and technology

EDUCATION

Students study snails, explore virtual reality and much more



Helen Pike
Metro | Calgary

Mount Royal University's Centre for Psychological Innovation is no Virtual Reality — it's a cutting edge facility that's opened doors for undergraduate students.

Wednesday, a ribbon cutting marked the official opening of MRU's high-tech facility. The 437-square-metre, \$1.4 million facility packed with shiny new research tools for the post-secondary's undergraduate students to enjoy is a big step for the institution as it continues to make the transition from college to university.

"We have a bigger research presence now," said Anthony Chaston, PhD and assistant chair of the Department of Psychology.

"This is one more step in Mount Royal making that complete transition to a university, where we're doing top level cutting-edge research, and getting the facility that's necessary to do that."

Josh Stewart is a fourth-year Honours Psychology student who is working on his thesis, which looks at how virtual reality melds with psychology. The innovative research studies what happens to anxiety levels through the lens of VR goggles.

"Their investment in the technology has opened up a ton of doors and a ton of op-



Josh Stewart, left, stands next to Anthony Chaston, Chair of the Department of Psychology, who is holding a VR set.

HELEN PIKE/METRO

tions for more research in the future," Stewart said. "Virtual reality, it's very new technology and there's not much research into it, which means that you're not taking other people's ideas and adapting them, you have to come up with ideas from scratch."

Chaston said it's possible they will be creating studies that could inform future rules and regulations surrounding

“
Their investment in technology has opened up a ton of doors.

Josh Stewart

virtual reality like social interactions, or sexual harassment on VR.

And these aren't graduate students with half a decade of studies under their belt, these are undergraduate students having opportunities to work and create their own place in emerging fields.

"It's quite unique," Chaston said. "We have a lab culture."

In the more traditional looking lab, snails are giving researchers clues about what flushing anti depressants into

our water systems could do to our overall health.

"It allows us to do neuroscience research, look at the effect of different drugs on the development of a fetus, a snail, stuff like that," Chaston said.

The centre has been opening in a phased approach and is now where 10 honours students will spend countless hours at MRU.

PARKS CANADA

Vigilance for busy camping season

Autumn Fox
For Metro

Parks Canada is hoping hikers and campers will be smarter than the average bear when enjoying the great outdoors this year.

With the distribution of the Discovery Pass, allowing free admission into Canada's national parks, it is expected that Banff, Jasper, Waterton Lakes and other Alberta parks will see a record number of visitors this summer — at the risk of potentially affecting wildlife in the area.

"Parks Canada has been in this business for a long time, and in some ways we're world-renowned for our track record welcoming millions of visitors every year while meeting our obligations to maintain the ecological integrity of the park," said Locke Marshall, visitor experience manager at Waterton Lakes.

Because of this, Marshall said Parks Canada is upping its manpower and online resources to keep tourists and wildlife safe within the park.

Steve Young, public relations and communications officer for Jasper National Park, said their Wildlife Guardians program had been expanded to run throughout the entirety of the summer.

Staff are trained to educate visitors observing wildlife on how to do so safely and without stressing the animals, "so you've got that educational component and that prevention component," said Young.

Parks Canada is again implementing the "Bare" Campsite program, in which campers who leave food, garbage or pets unattended will be issued warnings and risk losing their camping permits.

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Second run for Northlander

FILM

Aboriginal sci-fi beams back into theatres



Aaron Chatha
Metro | Calgary

The *Northlander*, helmed by Calgarian Benjamin Ross Hayden, is returning to theatres for a limited second run.

The film is a sci-fi led by an entirely Aboriginal cast. The came through Calgary during its first theatrical run in October, and has proven to be a big enough hit that the producers behind the film and gearing up to bring it back later this month.

And not only in Calgary — *Northlander* is hitting seven major Canadian cities, including Vancouver, Montreal and Toronto.

"It's really nice to see, on a national level, that Telefilm Canada is proud to support a different kind of science fiction," said Hayden.



The *Northlander* follows Cygnus, a hunter in a future where nature has recovered the land. COURTESY BENJAMIN ROSS HAYDEN

"Indigenous futures is a really unique genre of science fiction, there's many new stories to be told and it's great to see a strong response throughout the country."

The film is based on Métis leader Louis Riel.

But instead of setting *The Northlander* in the 1880s, Hayden flings history for-

ward to the year 2961, to a dust-swept landscape where danger and death lingers in every shadow.

The hero of *Northlander* is a hunter named Cygnus who is called to rise above his duty when food and water become scarce.

His voyage across the landscape — filmed in Drumheller's

badlands — brings him into contact with the heretics, who represent the historic colonials.

Hayden brought to screen a fully realized world, with a distinct look through makeup and costumes which blends historic and future looks.

In releasing a successful film, timing is everything

according to Hayden. He feels that right now, the government and Canadians are willing to explore new perspectives and genres in ways they haven't typically done before.

Northlander will play at the Plaza theatre from April 7 to 14. Producers and cast will be in attendance for several of the showings.

STUDENTS

School food program to expand

Alberta is expanding its school food program.

It announced today that the program, which ensures students receive a meal or snack each day, will be in every publicly funded school board in the 2017-18 school year.

School boards must demonstrate how their program adheres to the Alberta Nutrition Guidelines for Children and Youth and are required to include a nutrition education component as part of the program.

The Alberta government introduced the program in the fall of 2016 in 14 school boards at a total cost of \$3.5 million. The province says right now 5,000 students in 33 Alberta schools are receiving a meal or snack each day.

Premier Rachel Notley says it's recognized that students can't focus in class if they have an empty stomach.

"Giving students access to a daily nutritious meal not only ensures they have the fuel they need to get through the school day, it also helps develop the skills that ensure lifelong healthy nutrition," Notley said in a release.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

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The film *Sensitive Parts* deals with anxiety and interpersonal fears. COURTESY BRENDAN PROST

Sensitive Parts a labour of love

MOVIES

Actors asked to take vacation from day jobs to shoot film



Aaron Chatha
Metro | Calgary

Brendan Prost will be exposing Calgarians to his *Sensitive Parts* for the first time this month.

It's the newest film from the young director, and was created with a budget of only \$8,000 — a labour of love and favours.

"Including begging, pleading, being completely shameless," he laughed. "I've been doing these no-budget feature films for a long time, so I'm very mindful when I'm conceiving of a project to write it with the limitations and resources

in front of me."

This feature was written with three specific actors in mind. The film follows the character of Dolore, who is forced to confront her own anxiety and interpersonal fears when she finds out her best friend and current boyfriend have a romantic past.

Luckily, the imaginary manifestation of an iconic pop star floats in to help her out.

Although Prost and lead actress Carolyn Yonge are Albertan, the movie was filmed in Vancouver. Prost financed it himself, and asked all his actors to take two weeks vacation from their actual day jobs to hammer out the film.

Cultivating a fun atmosphere when you really can't afford to do anything wrong

was one of the auteur filmmakers biggest challenges.

"Creativity is a hard thing to cram into a really intense and stressful period of time." He said. "To insist that someone show up and do their best work, in a 12-day shooting period, which is very fast and intense, it's not exactly conducive to that."

Luckily, Calgarians have been very supportive in the past.

"There are great films being made in your own backyard about the experiences in your community, about your neighbourhood, peers and the local subculture you have," he said.

Sensitive Parts premieres April 13 at the Globe Cinema, and will be followed by a cast and crew Q&A.



I've been doing these no-budget feature films for a long time.

Brendan Prost

CANNABIS

Activist planting seeds of civil disobedience in return to city

Autumn Fox
For Metro | Calgary

In a bold move, pro-cannabis activist Dana Larsen is risking arrest again when his speaking tour returns to Calgary this Friday.

Larsen was arrested last year and charged with trafficking and possession with intent to traffic when he dis-

tributed free cannabis seeds as part of his Overgrow Canada campaign to give away five million seeds — it was the only city on the tour where police got involved.

Larsen said he bears no ill will towards CPS, but said he'll be more prepared this time.

"I will have my lawyer's phone number written on my hand," he said.

While what he's doing is

technically illegal, Larsen points out the irony in the system, in that bong shops are also illegal, and many head shops can sell high potency seeds over the counter — as long as the customer is aware it's illegal to germinate them.

CPS issued a statement Wednesday afternoon saying they do not disclose "investigative tactics or operational plans," but stated simply, "We are aware of the event."

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Police turn to spy tech

PRIVACY

Mounties admit they use devices to collect cellular details

The RCMP used controversial spy technology to track cell phone data in 19 criminal investigations last year — the first official public acknowledgement that the force uses surreptitious devices to collect Canadians' cellular details.

In a rare briefing with reporters from the Toronto Star, CBC and the Globe and Mail Wednesday morning, RCMP Chief Superintendent Jeff Adam said his force owns 10 so-called "mobile device identifier" (MDI) devices with the ability to gather high-level data about the phone's location — but not private communications.

"We will confirm officially that the RCMP possesses and uses mobile identifier technology in order to identify and locate a suspect in a criminal investigation," he said. "This capability can be used to further criminal investigations relating to national security, serious organized crime and other serious criminal code offences that impact the safety and security of Canadians."

Adam said the devices identify a suspect's cellphone by gathering "very limited" signalling information in a given vicinity and collecting unique identification information from the phone — called International Mobile Subscriber Identity (IMSI) and International Mobile Equipment Identity numbers (IMEI).

"What the RCMP technology does not do is collect private

communications," said Adam. That includes voice and audio communications, email messages, text messages, contact lists, images, encryption keys or basic subscriber information, he said.

While MDI technology does allow for the collection of personal communications, the RCMP uses equipment that — by policy — does not capture private communications, said Adam.

But Brenda McPhail, director of privacy, technology and surveillance at the Canadian Civil Liberties Association, said even metadata collection is an invasion of privacy.

"Metadata includes location information. That is intimately personal. The fact that they only collect metadata doesn't let them off the hook," she said.

The same MDI technology used to target a suspect will also gather up the cellular data of many other Canadians, Adam confirmed.

Ontario's former privacy commissioner, Ann Cavoukian, said the "drag net" nature of the technology puts the privacy of potentially tens of thousands of innocent, law-abiding people at risk.

"Surely that data should be deleted. It certainly shouldn't be retained, I totally reject that," Cavoukian said. "The data that is secured, that is not needed, why would that data be retained at all?"

Now the director of the Privacy and Big Data Institute at Ryerson University, Cavoukian said the government should be destroying data that's not related to investigations as soon as it's identified and called for much more stringent oversight to ensure that the technology isn't abused. TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE



In this courtroom sketch, Karim Baratov (right) addresses the court as his lawyer Amedeo Dicarlo (bottom left), Crown Heather Graham (second from left), lawyer Deepak Paradkar (top left) and Justice Alan Whitten look on. THE CANADIAN PRESS

COURT

Accused hacker appears in bail hearing

The father of a Canadian man accused in a massive hack of Yahoo emails told an Ontario court Wednesday that he'd keep all electronic devices locked away and out of his son's reach if his child is released on bail.

Akhmet Tokbergenov was testifying in a Hamilton courtroom at his son's bail hearing, saying he and his wife are prepared to do whatever the court orders if the 22-year-old is released from custody.

Karim Baratov was arrested under the Extradition Act last month after U.S. authorities indicted him and three others — two of them allegedly officers of Russia's Federal Security Service — for computer hacking, economic espionage and other

crimes.

American authorities have alleged in court documents that Baratov poses an "extremely high flight risk" in part due to his alleged ties to Russian intelligence agents and his financial resources. They've noted that Baratov did not appear to have any "legitimate employment."

Baratov's lawyer has called the allegations against his client unfounded. He's seeking to have the young man released on bail, arguing his client poses no flight risk.

Baratov's father told the court he has no doubt his son will comply with any bail conditions.

Tokbergenov said that every day since Baratov's arrest, he and his wife have discussed their plan should their son be released



I'm going to watch him as I've been watching him since he was a little child.

Dinera Tokbergenova

on bail.

"I have a very concrete plan. All electronic devices, all computers, everything will be put in a lockbox," he said. "My son will not have access neither to a TV, nor a computer, not to any electronics."

Tokbergenov said that he works from home and would be able to monitor his son.

Baratov's mother, Dinera Tokbergenova, testified that she would do the same.

"As much as I love him, I'm going to put that effort to watch

over him," she said. "I'm going to watch him as I've been watching him since he was a little child."

Baratov's mother added that her son was a kind, thoughtful man.

"Karim is very smart, he's very intelligent, he's very attentive," she said. "And he will take his own shirt (off) for another person and he will give it to them."

In a sworn affidavit filed with the court before Wednesday's hearing, Baratov said he won't try to use electronic devices if released on bail. THE CANADIAN PRESS

POLITICS

Beyak dumped from Indigenous committee

Conservative Sen. Lynn Beyak, who famously declared "some good" came out of Canada's residential schools, has been removed from the Senate's committee on Indigenous peoples.

A spokesperson for interim Conservative leader Rona Ambrose says the senator's controversial comments do not reflect the party's position on residential schools.

Earlier this week, an Indigenous senator who sits on the committee said she would boycott its meetings as long as Beyak was still a member. Sen. Sandra Lovelace Nicholas says she was "shocked and

dismayed" by her Senate colleague's remarks.

Canada's Truth and Reconciliation Commission spent six years examining the government-funded, church-run, infamous hotbeds of abuse and mistreatment that operated from the 1870s to 1996.

The Conservatives were in power in 2008 when the federal government delivered an abject apology in the House of Commons to families and survivors, a fact not lost on Enwright.

"It was Prime Minister Stephen Harper who made an historic apology to the vic-

tims of residential schools and launched the Truth and Reconciliation Commission," he said.

Earlier this week, Sen. Sandra Lovelace Nicholas, who sits on the aboriginal committee, said she was "shocked and dismayed" by her Senate colleague's remarks.

She said she would boycott the committee's meetings as long as Beyak remained a member.

Assembly of First Nations National Chief Perry Bellegarde has also called for Beyak to be removed from the committee. THE CANADIAN PRESS



Lynn Beyak's comments on residential schools angered many. GOVERNMENT OF CANADA

PARLIAMENT

PM showcases idea for procedural reform

Prime Minister Justin Trudeau responded personally to all questions asked by fellow MPs in the House of Commons Wednesday.

The move came as the Liberal government tries to convince the opposition of the merits of its proposed changes to the ins and outs of parliamentary procedure.

One suggestion is to set aside one day of the week for MPs to direct questions to the prime minister, such as is done in Britain.

It was one of the promises in the Liberal campaign platform, and Trudeau appeared to enjoy his surprise stunt to show off how it would work.

"I am pleased to be able to personally answer this question," he said at one point.

The spectacle prompted some snark, particularly from Conservative MP Tony Clement, who wondered aloud whether one could change the rules to also guarantee a corresponding increase in the quality of Trudeau's answers. THE CANADIAN PRESS

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BRUSSELS

\$6B aid pledged by over 70 countries

International donors pledged \$6 billion in aid for war-ravaged Syria on Wednesday as the UN Security Council held emergency talks over a suspected chemical attack that killed dozens in a rebel-held province.

Donors from more than 70 countries meeting at a conference on Syria in Brussels made a "collective pledge of \$6 billion for this year alone," EU Humanitarian Aid Commissioner Christos Stylianides said.

Stylianides described the pledge — which appeared to approach the conference hosts' target — as "an impressive figure."

Syria's "needs are massive. Our conference is sending a powerful message," he said. We are not letting down the people of Syria."

However, the goodwill at the meeting was shadowed by the chemical attack Tuesday in Idlib that killed 75 people.

Responding to the grim news, UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres appealed for Syria's warring factions and government backers such as Russia and Iran to bring an end to a six-year conflict that has taken the lives of almost 400,000 people.

"Nobody is winning this war, everybody is losing," Guterres said. "It is having a detrimental and destabilizing effect on the entire region and it is providing a focus that is feeding the new threat of global terrorism."

Nearly half the Syrian population has been displaced by the violence, with millions seeking sanctuary in neighbouring Lebanon, Jordan and Turkey, or heading further west to Europe. UN agencies estimate war damage across Syria so far at \$350 billion, including physical destruction and the loss of economic activity. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Death toll rises in Syria

MIDDLE EAST

Global leaders seek answers about attack in northern town

Abdel Hameed Alyousef lost his two children, his wife and other relatives in the suspected chemical attack Tuesday in the northern Syrian town of Khan Sheikhoun that killed over 80 people, including at least 30 children and 20 women.

The 29-year-old father held his nine-month-old twins, Aya and Ahmed, each in an arm. He choked back tears, mumbling, "Say goodbye, baby, say goodbye" to their lifeless bodies.

When the airstrike took place,

"I was right beside them and I carried them outside the house with their mother," Alyousef said.

He brought them to paramedics and, thinking they would be OK, went to look for the rest of his family. He found the bodies of two of his brothers, two nephews and a niece, as well as neighbours and friends. Only later was he told his children and wife had died.

The death toll from the suspected chemical attack rose to 86 on Wednesday as activists and rescue workers found more survivors hiding in shelters near the site of the assault, one of the deadliest in Syria's civil war.

The attack on Khan Sheikhoun killed dozens of people on Tuesday, leaving residents gasping for breath and convuls-



Abdul-Hamid Alyousef cries as he holds his twin babies who were killed. ALAA ALYOUSEF VIA THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

ing in the streets. Haunting images of lifeless children piled in heaps reflected the magnitude of the attack.

A resolution drafted by Britain, France and the U.S. stresses

+ U.S. REACTION

President Donald Trump declared on Wednesday the deadly chemical attack in Syria had crossed "many, many lines" and abruptly

changed his views of Syrian President Bashar Assad.

But he refused to say what the U.S. might do in response.

the Syrian government's obligation to provide information about its air operations, including the names of those in command of helicopter squadrons on the day of the attack.

Damascus and its ally Moscow have denied they were behind the attack. Russia's Defence Ministry said the toxic agents were released when a Syrian airstrike hit a rebel arsenal, an account Britain dismissed at an emergency UN

session called in response to the attack.

British Ambassador Matthew Rycroft said the U.K. had seen nothing that would suggest rebels "have the sort of chemical weapons that are consistent with the symptoms that we saw yesterday."

Russia said it would submit information from its Defence Ministry to the Security Council debate.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS



Syrians bury the bodies of victims of a suspected toxic gas attack in Khan Sheikhoun, a nearby rebel-held town in Syria's northwestern Idlib province, on Wednesday. FADI AL-HALABI/AFP/GETTY IMAGES

KANSAS

Student sleuths oust incoming principal



Pittsburg High School students prepare to Skype with incoming principal Amy Robertson. Robertson has since resigned over concerns about her credentials. EMILY SMITH/PITTSBURG HIGH SCHOOL

An incoming high school principal has resigned in Kansas after student reporters investigated and raised questions about her credentials.

The Pittsburg School Board accepted Amy Robertson's resignation on Tuesday, saying she felt the decision was "in the best interest of the district ... in light of the issues that arose."

The main concern stemmed from her receiving her master's and doctoral degrees from Corlins University, an unaccredited, online school. Robertson said she received her degrees before

the university lost accreditation.

"She was going to be the head of our school, and we wanted (to) be assured that she was qualified and had the proper credentials," Trina Paul, a student editor at Pittsburg High School's newspaper, The Booster Redux.

Superintendent Destry Brown praised the student reporters, saying: "I appreciate that our kids ask questions and don't just accept something because somebody told them." He told the Pittsburg Morning Sun they "did a great job with the research they did." THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

U.S. POLITICS

Bannon removed from controversial posting

President Donald Trump has removed chief strategist Steve Bannon from the National Security Council, reversing an earlier, controversial decision to give Bannon access to the group's high-level meetings.

A new memorandum about the council's composition was published Wednesday in the Federal Register. The memo no longer lists the chief strategist as a member of the Principals Committee, a group of high-ranking officials who meet to discuss pressing national secur-

ity priorities.

A senior White House official said Wednesday that Bannon was initially placed on the National Security Council after Trump's inauguration as a measure to ensure implementation of the president's vision, including efforts to downsize and streamline operations at the NSC.

Bannon's addition to the NSC sparked criticism that it was inappropriate for the political adviser to play a role in national security matters.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

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NASA

Stay extended for oldest female astronaut

The world's oldest and most experienced female astronaut is getting three extra months in orbit.

NASA announced Wednesday that Peggy Whitson will remain on the International Space Station until September.

The 57-year-old arrived last November and was supposed to return to Earth in June. But under an agreement between NASA and the Russian Space Agency, she'll stay another three months and take advan-

tage of an empty seat on a Soyuz capsule in the fall.

This mission — her third — will now last close to 10 months. Scientists are eager to monitor any changes to her body, to add to the knowledge gained from retired astronaut Scott Kelly's one-year flight.

The two men she flew up with in November — France's Thomas Pesquet and Russia's

Oleg Novitskiy — will return in June without her.

Whitson has already spent more time in space than any other woman, counting all her missions, and just last week set a record for the most spacewalks

by a woman, with eight. This weekend, she'll take over as space station commander, her second time at the job.

534

Total number of day Whitson will have spent in space come April 24, a U.S. record.

And on April 24, she'll set a new U.S. record for most accumulated time in space. That NASA record — 534 days — is currently held by former space station resident Jeffrey Williams.

Whitson welcomed Wednesday's news. "I love being up here," she said in a statement. "Living and working aboard the space station is where I feel like I make the greatest contribution, so I am constantly trying to squeeze every drop out of my time here." THE ASSOCIATED PRESS



A medical worker sprays people being discharged from the Island Clinic Ebola treatment centre in Monrovia, Liberia. Bulldozers on Wednesday cleared the remains of a once busy Ebola treatment unit in Liberia. JEROME DELAY/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Ebola unit demolished

DISEASE

Liberia marks centre's last day, honours dead and care workers

Bulldozers cleared the remains of a once busy Ebola treatment unit in Liberia on Wednesday, as health care workers, officials and some who were treated there gathered to mark the centre's last day and official decommissioning.

Music echoed near the gathering at the former ELWA Treatment Center in Paynesville, Liberia, the largest centre in the country during the 2014-2015 outbreak of the virus that killed more than 4,800 people in this West African country.

The virus' surge in West Africa two years ago was Ebola's deadliest ever. About 11,300 people died starting in December 2013, mostly in Liberia, Guinea and Sierra Leone. The World Health Organization declared an end to the outbreak in June 2016.

Physician's assistant Jianjay

Moore-Potter, 40, was among the health care workers who gathered to pay tribute to their time at the centre.

"From the beginning, it was very hard because we never knew anything about Ebola," Moore-Potter said. People working at the treatment unit overcame great challenges while taking terrible risks, she said.

"We got courage from our manager, who told us as Liberians we should not abandon our own people," she said. "I saw tears in his eyes, and on that day we all wept and said we should take the risk to be here."

When survivors started leaving the unit, Moore-Potter said they knew a day without Ebola would come. Shopkeeper Moses Akoi, 42, thanked the health care workers who saved his life.

"I thought there was no hope for me," Akoi said. "I appreciate God that I am a survivor today."

Health Ministry officials said an infectious disease treatment centre at Redemption Hospital in western Monrovia will care for future Ebola patients, if the virus recurs.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

IN BRIEF

'Short window' to ensure peace in Colombia

The U.N. envoy for Colombia says there's "a relatively short window of opportunity" to establish a solid foundation for peace between the government and the country's largest rebel group.

Jean Arnault told

the Security Council on Wednesday that consolidating peace will be a long-term process but in the short-term it's key to lay the foundations by ensuring that the FARC rebels lay down their arms and are reintegrated into society.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

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Quebec emerges as electric car capital

AUTOMOTIVE SALES

Success driven partly by small-town dealership

A small corner of Quebec cottage country has quietly become the electric car capital of Canada, driven in part by the unlikely success of a small-town dealership.

The region of Lanaudière north of Montreal has the highest per capita electric car ownership in Quebec, according to the provincial electric vehicle association.

Several factors make Quebec fertile ground for electric cars. Electricity is relatively cheap and the provincial government offers sales rebates and recently passed the country's only legislation requiring automakers to sell a minimum number of electric, plug-in hybrid and hydrogen fuel-cell vehicles for the 2018 model year.

But the leading position of Lanaudière is also due to Bourgeois Chevrolet in the small town of Rawdon, which industry experts say sells more electric cars than any other traditional dealership in Canada.

Co-owner Hugo Jeanson says the dealership's decision a few years ago to focus on electric cars as a way to grow the busi-



Hugo Jeanson's dealership sold 400 electric cars last year. THE CANADIAN PRESS

ness attracted a following, with customers coming from as far away as New Brunswick and British Columbia.

"I don't know why the other dealerships are not embracing the movement and the turn in technologies, but I'm not complaining," he said.

Three generations of the family have been selling cars since 1959 in the town, where the population of about 11,000 swells in the summer with visitors.

The dealership sold almost 400 new and used electric cars

last year, primarily the plug-in hybrid Chevy Volt, Canada's top-selling electric vehicle. It recently halted orders for the all-electric Chevy Bolt after selling out for the year.

Jeanson credits the dealership's success to having many models on the lot, training staff about electric cars, paying them salaries instead of commissions and letting prospective customers test-drive the cars for several days. The dealership has also donated chargers to local businesses, helping to encourage demand.

Jeanson says he's lost some Ontario customers since the neighbouring province last year began to offer a rebate of up to \$14,000. But he hopes a new \$4,000 rebate for used all-electric vehicles imported from outside Quebec - introduced in last month's provincial budget - will lift sales.

Nissan Canada, which makes the electric Leaf, said the new rebate solidifies Quebec as a leader in electric vehicles. Its dealership in Sherbrooke sells the most new Leafs in Canada.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

SOCIAL MEDIA

Upstart threat to Twitter

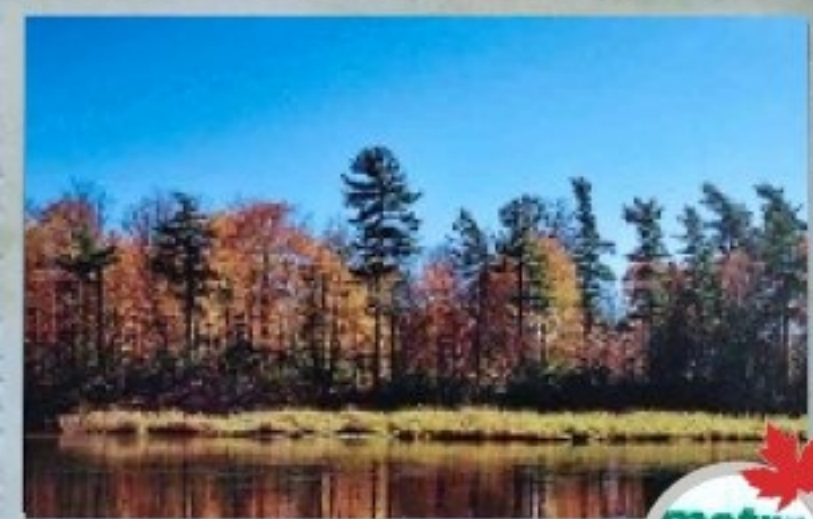
Twitter's rampant racism, harassment and abuse remains the largest thorn in the side of many users, but an upstart social network named after a prog-metal band is promising a less hostile experience, and thousands of Twitter's embittered

birds are flocking to it. Mastodon, an open-source Twitter clone created by 24-year-old German Eugen Rochko, will look and feel very familiar to long-time tweeps. However, they will notice some new features like a 500-character limit and ability to make posts private. ANDREW FIFIELD/METRO

150 WAYS of looking at Canada

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CHANTAL HÉBERT ON LOSING PATIENCE WITH BOMBARDIER



After taking tax-payer money, laying off hundreds and rewarding top execs with pay hikes, Bombardier leaves cover-seeking political allies with little more than a fig leaf

It has long been taken for granted that no prime minister, no Quebec premier would ever let Bombardier go under on his or her watch. The aerospace giant's leading contribution to Canada's R&D sector, the thousands of jobs it provides kept it on the short list of Canadian corporations that no government would allow to fail.

Over and above any economic consideration, the fact that Bombardier was the corporate apple in the eye of most Quebecers guaranteed it was treated as a political sacred cow in both capitals.

In the wake of the uproar over its executives' compensation that is a status Bombardier may want to avoid putting to the test. It has become untouchable in the wrong sense of the word.

It is hard to overstate the magnitude of the popular backlash the company's management has unleashed by handing itself pay hikes and bonuses of a magnitude normally consistent with a corporate success story.

At this juncture, Bombardier would qualify for that title only if it were considered a feat to wrestle a multi-billion-dollar bailout from two orders of governments while eliminating thousands of jobs at home and abroad.

A poll published this weekend reported that 93 per cent of Quebecers were

93% of Quebecers are angry with the company's compensation plans.

angry over the compensation news. That is as close to unanimity as one can get. It is also the kind of number that no politician can take lightly.

At this point, Bombardier has no friends in the provincial and federal capitals or at least none who is not embarrassed to be associated with the company. In

opposition is having a field day arguing that it walks that talk when it is cutting social programs but not when it is issuing corporate welfare cheques.

On Parliament Hill, the controversy has given new life to the debate over whether Justin Trudeau was right to pledge \$372.5 million in loans to Bombardier

tion Avenir Québec had been arguing that the premier had failed to attach even minimal strings to the public money it handed Bombardier.

Even as the premier tried to turn the heat of public opinion on Trudeau for taking his time to match his government's contribution, the federal Liberals' standing in voting intentions in Quebec continued to climb while that of his own party declined.

When a federal package that fell significantly short of matching Quebec's commitment was belatedly delivered in early February, it was Couillard, and not Trudeau, who took the most flak – for having failed to exact guarantees from the company that Ottawa had secured.

As of now, both governments can only hope that Bombardier will make good on its promise to turn the corner on its financial difficulties – and that it will not ask for more money.

The company may have managed to make corporate bailouts of any kind a lose-lose proposition for politicians.

Bombardier executives believe Quebecers will get over their anger and let bygones be bygones sooner rather than later. But then, they also believed they deserved big bonuses for milking billions of public dollars out of two governments.

They might keep in mind that Quebec's licence plates read: Je me souviens.

Chantal Hébert is a national affairs writer. Her column appears in Metro every Thursday.



TOO BIG TO FAIL Bombardier, and its CEO Alain Bellemare (pictured), has become untouchable in the wrong sense of the word, writes Chantal Hébert. THE CANADIAN PRESS

response to public pressure, it has announced that it was postponing part of the pay hikes for a year. That has provided its cover-seeking political allies with little more than a fig leaf.

In Quebec the compensation story cut the legs from under Philippe Couillard's Liberal government just as it was getting a rare post-budget boost. The premier has spent the past week fending off opposition charges that his government bailed out the company with little or no regard for safeguarding taxpayers' money from abuse.

Couillard has chosen to make fiscal rigour the mantra of his government. The

earlier this year.

There were plenty of signs in the months leading to the self-serving Bombardier compensation move that Quebecers were running out of patience with its financial demands. Only a company disconnected from reality or too arrogant to think it should be accountable to the taxpayers who bailed it out would have failed to take note of those signs.

Last fall Couillard's decision to sign off on a \$1.3 billion bailout raised more opposition questions in the National Assembly than it elicited applause among the public.

From day one, the Coali-

Brands you can trust when the world starts to burn



Vicky Mochama
Metro

When the revolution starts, which brand will be there for me?

I wondered this as I watched the caffeinated cola ad starring Kendall Jenner as a model-turned-protest leader. In it, she solves police brutality by handing a police officer a non-Coke soda. When she does it, a cheer goes up in the crowd as if to say, "We realize the police were hypoglycemic. Thanks, Kendall!"

After much backlash, the company has pulled the ad. They're not the only ones to pull ads this week.

The New York Times reported that Fox News blowhard Bill O'Reilly has had to pay out \$13 million in sexual harassment lawsuits over the last few years. Forty advertisers (and counting) have responded by pulling their ads from O'Reilly's show, including major ones like Mercedes Benz, BMW, AllState Insurance and GlaxoSmithKline.

None of these companies pulled their ads from the network last July when allegations surfaced about Fox News CEO Roger Ailes sexually harassing employees. (He left the company soon after.) Maybe all those brands were just monitoring the situation.

Nine months after Ailes' departure, women must be overjoyed that dental company Invisalign is standing up for women.

There's really no reason for brands to be left out of dismantling capitalism.

In fact, between caffeinated beverages and luxury cars, it

is invigorating to find brands that will be there to support the dismantling of systems of oppression.

For example, right-wing media has been assuring us that a race war is forthcoming. Done properly, it's a marketer's dream.

With their long-standing work on buying cool via basketball stars and rap music, Sprite will surely offer to be the drink of black people. Nothing says cool and refreshing like a battle for racial superiority.

I have been planning my outfit for the race war for some time, but what I am really hoping is that Beyoncé's athleisure line, Ivy Park, will supply our uniforms. Canadians who decline to take part can pick up their non-combatant grey sweats from Race War Amnesty title sponsor Roots.

But it's not just during the upcoming race war (sponsored by Halliburton?) when brands can find a lucrative market.

There are unique opportunities right now. As the resistance to Donald Trump coalesces in the United States, there is a profitable opportunity for Staples to provide branded poster board to marchers. In addition to their Easy button, they could issue a "RESIST" button.

There is a product for every consumer. It's just a matter of finding the company that fulfills your desire for de-funding private prisons but also serves the best latte.

Gil Scott Heron was right. The revolution will not be televised.

It will be streamed live on YouTube and hosted by BuzzFeed.

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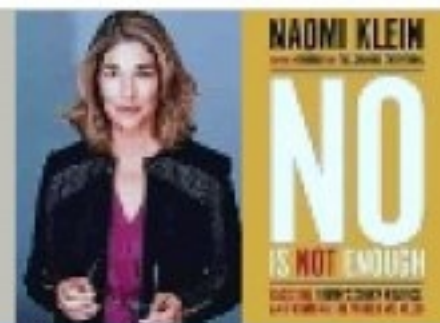
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Remembering Mom through her pearls

MEMOIR

Local style guru switches gears in emotional new book

Sue Carter
For Metro Canada



During her last days in the hospital intensive-care unit, Karen von Hahn's mother Susan could no longer speak, but she could communicate by spelling out letters on a white card.

Susan's last word tapped out to her daughter was "pearls," which von Hahn instinctively knew meant that she was to inherit her mother's prized jewellery.

Von Hahn describes the art deco-fashioned strand of precious jewels as "fat and creamy, but elegantly flapper," in the opening of her new book, *What Remains: Object Lessons in Love and Loss*, a tribute to her mother, who died in 2012, and their complicated relationship.

Von Hahn, one of Toronto's most well-known and enduring style journalists, has spent most of the last three decades talking about the meaning of objects we surround ourselves with. It's a subject she knows

intimately from birth.

Her mother Susan was a glamorous, witty, fun-loving, and perfectly tanned woman with a penchant for designer clothes and a driving need to be immersed in beauty, whether it be a Yves Saint Laurent peasant blouse or the satin silver couches where she would entertain over many vodka cocktails.

Von Hahn catalogues these items with sharp detail, in part to better understand her mother's life and, at times, the pain Susan's seeming narcissism would cause those around her.

"In the end we're left with nothing but a person's things. The reminders and the touchstones and the artefacts of a person's life," observes von Hahn, who started writing *What Remains* a year after her mother's death.

"What did they collect? What did they aspire to? What did they hope for or want to be? All these things are really expressed in the things that surround a person's life. It's like every person is curating their own museum. I thought that was a way in — to circle around the idea of my moth-

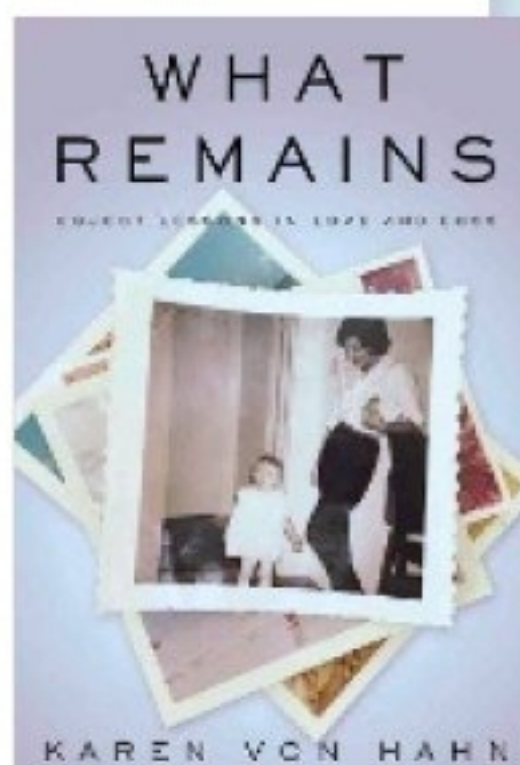
er and my memories of her through the lens of objects and what they mean."

Growing up with a fabulously turned-out mom — and one who demands constant attention, often at the expense of others — can be tough on kids, especially as they test out their own emerging identities, only to discover there's little room left to share in the spotlight.

Von Hahn and her siblings were often left to their own devices, even when a little parental nurturing was called for. "In our house it was clear that the story was about my parents," says von Hahn. "It was their love affair and we children were just ancillary to that."

In the book, she recalls her mother's obsession with glamour as both a point of pride and embarrassment.

"She would appear at school and wouldn't look like any of the other mothers at all. She didn't care about the rules or whether other people thought she was appropriate. She was a bohemian at heart," says von Hahn. "But sometimes as a kid you think, 'Oh my God, can't they just be normal, like everyone else's parents for just one



second?"

It's been roughly four years since von Hahn starting writing *What Remains*, still in the thick emotional pool of both sorrow and relief.

And while the memoir may have been therapeutic in some ways, she continues to deeply miss her mother's physical presence and sharp insight.

"She refused to be forgotten. She was one of a kind. I felt she deserved the effort to be remembered because she was just amazing," says von Hahn. "I hope that the portrait of her I paint, which is warts and all, is true. I was mad for her."

Sue Carter is the editor at Quill & Quire magazine.



In her memoir, journalist Karen von Hahn pays homage to her glamorous late mother, who she says was a bohemian at heart — something she didn't always appreciate as a kid. CONTRIBUTED

In our house it was clear that the story was about my parents. It was their love affair and we children were just ancillary to that.

Karen von Hahn

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More than a feline: why cats are so weird

INTERVIEW

The whiskers and all story of what kitty is really thinking

Genna Buck
Metro | Toronto



Cats are weird. They growl when they're happy, hiss when they're mad, and do that weird kneading thing on the couch for no apparent reason. There's some debate about whether they love us back, or if they'd be plotting to murder us if they only had opposable thumbs. They are some of the wildest animals we let into our homes. Thomas McNamee, author of the new book *The Inner Life of Cats*, says our cats love us, and they can communicate with us — we just have to learn how to listen.

What made you decide to write a book about cats' minds?

I guess it came down to guilt. A little black cat walked into our lives when we lived in a ranch in Montana. We found



Learning cats' body language is key to bonding, says author Thomas McNamee. ISTOCK

her in the barn, and she proceeded to live with us for the next 15 years. We didn't know much about how to bring up and treat a cat, and she turned out to be sort of a fraidy cat. I later learned a lot more about cats. We made so many mistakes. And I realized people everywhere were likely making some of the same

mistakes that we made.

There's ongoing debate over whether cats are really domesticated — whether feral cats and house pets behave all that differently. Do you come down on a side?

I come down on both sides of it. Our cats are directly descended from the North Af-

rican wildcat, and they're not very far from them. A lot of their habits and their psychology are directly related to that wildcat. On the other hand, there are aspects of their being that have evolved to be extremely domestic. You have to pay attention to how cats relate to humans. Dogs are easy to read. Cats are not so

easy. But a cat really will love you.

So how do I know if my cat loves me?

The first step is to learn their body language. The most important expression of affection is the long, slow blink, looking right at you. And the straight tail with a little hook on top is a very friendly gesture. They will do things to you that wildcats do to one another to say, "I like you": bumping into your leg with their head, or rubbing their face against you.

What surprised you the most, out of all you learned?

The thing that struck me most is the depth and complexity of their emotions. I really had no idea how much was going on. There's been a tremendous amount of scientific research done in the last 20 years, and the results have not made it into the cat books that you can buy by the dozens.

What should be in those books?

People need to know that cats

have deep emotional needs. Some people feed them, let them out, that's it. And the cat becomes a living, breathing sofa cushion. And here's another thing: The most important thing in most cat's lives is their litter box. It's true. It's like "This is where I leave the most olfactory information, these is my territory, my headquarters." And if your litter box situation is not right, your cat is going to be out of sorts all the time.

How do you know if you're doing the litter box right?

Well, the cat will eventually tell you. It needs to be sheltered, out of traffic, but it's got to have an escape route. Other cats need to respect it. It needs to be clean, but not too clean. Bleach is no good either. Respect is very much tied to it. It sounds silly, but if you look at the cat when it's doing its business in the box, they have this kind of sort of dreamy look on their face. They're in this kind of trance. They're completely absorbed in the experience.

Cats are so weird...

Yes they are!



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JOHANNA SCHNELLER
WHAT I'M WATCHING

Inept, in more ways than one

THE SHOW: *Snatch*, Season 1, Episode 2 (Crave)
THE MOMENT: The rapping Hasidim

Londoners Albert (Luke Pasqualino) and Charlie (Rupert Grint) are in debt to gangsters. They've agreed to ferry three Brooklyn diamond merchants named Heimel, and their stash of stones, from Gatwick airport to a powerful fence.

Charlie's eyes widen in glee when he spies the Hasidim in their long coats, hats and shades, striding in slow motion like *Reservoir Dogs*. The three settle in the back seat of a minivan. "Where can we have a little fun around here?" Heimel #1 asks.

"What kind of fun are you referring to?" Charlie asks.

"Mad fun, da," replies Heimel #2.

"All work and no play makes Abel a dull boy," #1 says. #2 passes out tabs of MDMA. The Hasidim swallow.

"Turn up the music," #1 orders, and all three begin furiously rapping to Run DMC's It's

Tricky to Rock a Rhyme. With hand gestures.

This 10-hour series, based on a real gold heist, borrows the choppy, stop-start style from Guy Ritchie's 2000 film of the same name. Unfortunately, it borrows everything that's frantic, florid and faux-gangsta about it, too.

Alongside the rapping Hasidim, there are dirty boxers, mob-connected Cuban club-owners and not one but two self-serving, hard-boiled dames. There's also a father/son arc, as Albert tries to escape the shadow of his crooked dad Vic (Dougray Scott), who's still running heists from prison.

Under all the noise, though, the plot keeps taking the same wrong turn: the lads repeatedly trip on their ineptitude. Criminality can be fun. But too much criminal stupidity will make *Snatch* a dull show.

Johanna Schneller is a media connoisseur who zeroes in on pop-culture moments. She appears Monday through Thursday.



Rupert Grint as Charlie Cavendish-Scott in *Snatch*. CONTRIBUTED

MUSIC BRIEFS

Junos sales boost for stars

Call it the Juno effect. Data released by Nielsen Wednesday showed how featuring on Canadian music's biggest night paid off for some of the country's biggest artists.

Performers and winners saw huge spikes in fans streaming and buying their music after Sunday's ceremony. The Strumbellas, who won single of the year for Spirits, saw sales of that song increase nearly 200% while Alessia Cara, winner

of pop album of the year for Know It All saw her album increase 140% overnight. METRO

Manilow comes out at 73

Barry Manilow has come out as gay, telling *People* magazine that he hid his sexuality for decades because he thought he would be "disappointing fans if they knew." The 73-year-old music legend married his longtime manager, Gary Kief, in a 2014 ceremony in California.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

ADVERTISING

Pepsi pulls its Kar crash commercial

Pepsi is pulling an ad that is being widely criticized for appearing to trivialize protests for social justice causes.

The company said Monday that, "Pepsi was trying to project a global message of unity, peace and understanding. Clearly we missed the mark, and we apologize."

The ad shows Kendall Jenner, a member of the *Keeping Up With the Kardashians* reality TV family, stepping away from a modeling

shoot to join a crowd of young protesters. They cheer after Jenner hands a can of Pepsi to a police officer, who takes a sip.

PepsiCo had previously said the ad would "be seen globally across TV and digital" platforms.

Critics say the image of Jenner handing the officer a Pepsi evoked a photo of Black Lives Matter protester Ieshia Evans approaching an officer at a demonstration in Baton Rouge last year. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS



Kendall Jenner's Pepsi ad quickly lost its fizz. CONTRIBUTED



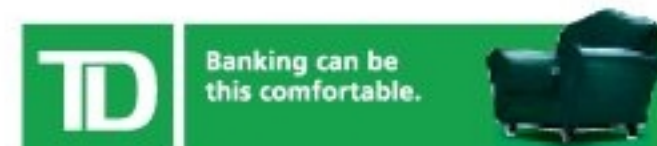
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² On average, based on a comparison of 2016 Aeroplan flight reward bookings against actual market base fares and leading financial institutions' travel rewards programs' terms and conditions. ³ Welcome Bonus of 15,000 Aeroplan Miles ("Welcome Bonus Miles") will be awarded to the Aeroplan Member account associated with the TD Aeroplan Visa Infinite Card Account ("Account") only after the first Purchase is made on the Account. To receive the additional 10,000 Aeroplan Miles, you must also: (a) apply for an Account between March 6, 2017, and June 14, 2017; (b) make \$1,000 in Purchases on your Account, including your first Purchase, within 90 days of Account approval. To receive the additional 5,000 Aeroplan Miles for adding an Authorized User to your Account ("Authorized User Bonus"), you must: (a) apply for an Account and add an Authorized User between March 6, 2017, and June 14, 2017; and (b) Authorized User must call and activate their Card by July 31, 2017. You can have a maximum of three (3) Authorized Users on your Account but you will only receive 1 (one) 5,000 Authorized User Bonus Aeroplan Miles offer. Annual Fee for each Authorized User Card added to the Account will apply. The Primary Cardholder is responsible for all charges to the Account, including those made by any Authorized User. If you have opened an Account in the last 6 months, you will not be eligible for these offers. We reserve the right to limit the number of Accounts opened by and the number of miles awarded to any one person. Your Account must be in good standing at the time bonus miles are awarded. Please allow 8 weeks after the conditions for each offer are fulfilled for the miles to be credited to your Aeroplan member account. Offers may be changed, withdrawn or extended at any time and cannot be combined with any other offer unless otherwise specified. These miles are not eligible for Aeroplan status. All trade-marks are property of their respective owners. [®] The Air Canada maple leaf logo and Air Canada are registered trade-marks of Air Canada, used under license. [®] The Aeroplan logo and Aeroplan are registered trade-marks of Air Canada Inc. [®] The TD logo and other trade-marks are the property of The Toronto-Dominion Bank.



MEET THE CONDO

Save on condo fees with townhomes



SUNSET RIDGE

CONTRIBUTED

Project overview

Perched on a crest in the heart of Cochrane, Sunset Ridge is a tranquil retreat with spectacular mountain views and gorgeous sunsets. The area features all the amenities you could ever need to live and grow.

Housing amenities

These three-storey townhomes come loaded with rear-attached garages featuring a tandem bay, front yard landscaped space, rear driveways and a variety of ground floor development options. Best part? No condo fees.

Location and transit

This master-planned community is nestled along a ridge overlooking Cochrane with five kilometres of pathways, parks and playgrounds and mountain views. Cochrane is located just 18 kilometres west of Calgary and is easily accessed by Highway 1A.

In the neighbourhood

Enjoy exceptional shopping, a convenient new K-8 community school, health services, entertainment, restaurants, parks, pathways and year-round recreation opportunities within a few minutes from home. Not too far away is northwest Calgary and all its amenities. KRISTA SYLVESTER/ FOR METRO

+ NEED TO KNOW

What: Sunset Ridge
Builder: Excel Homes
Developer: Melcor Developments
Location: Sunset Ridge in Cochrane
Building: Six-plexes and five-plexes
Models: Three-storey townhomes with five different floor plans

Sizes: From 1,337 to 1,669 square feet
Pricing: Ranging from \$280,000 to \$345,000
Status: Pre-construction
Sales centre: 7 Sundown Terrace, Cochrane, Alta.
Phone: (587) 362-2463
Email: sunsetridge@excel-homes.ca
Website: excelhomes.ca



REAL ESTATE

What's hot on the market

1 SALES CENTRE NOW OPEN

Vogue by La Caille: Location is key as this project is nestled just one block from the 8th Street LRT station and within easy walking distance of access to Calgary's Plus-15 walkway system. Visit the Sales Centre located at 912 5th Ave. SW.

2 STILL SELLING

The XII by XII GP Inc.: The XII has 14 stories, floor-to-ceiling windows, high-speed elevator with smart individual control, state-of-the-art automated parking system with minimum two stalls per unit, a full-time concierge and is located in the heart of Mission at 304 26 Ave. SW.

3 PRE-SELLING

Verve by Fram + Sloker: Located in the revitalized Downtown East Village, this stylish development revolves around contemporary architecture, fresh design and its highly sought-after location. Visit the presentation centre at 553 Riverfront Ave. SE.

KRISTA SYLVESTER/FOR METRO

In a homeowner's hindsight

NO REGRETS

Things they wish they'd known before buying

Camilla Cornell

Shoulda, woulda, coulda. If you've managed to make it through life with no regrets, you're definitely in the minority.

Even Frank Sinatra, who famously crooned I Did It My Way, had a few. But since buying a home is probably one of the biggest-ticket purchases you will ever make in your life, we asked recent homebuyers to share with us some of the things they wish they'd known about the process.

1. **Get your ducks in a row well in advance when it comes to financing.** Chris Ryall lost the house of his dreams because "the bank wasn't able to get their act together in time." Ryall had already owned and



After having to withdraw a bid he put on a 'dream' home due to an abundance of unexpected paperwork, Chris Ryall purchased a townhome with his girlfriend in Burlington, Ont. last July. TIM FRASER

paid off two houses, but after his divorce, he and his girlfriend wanted to buy a house together.

"I figured getting financing would just be a formality," he says. Ryall reasoned that he owns a business, has a credit score in the top five per cent, and has been with the same bank for many years. But he couldn't have

been more wrong. "None of that meant diddly-squat," he says.

2. **Do a credit check in advance.** "Credit scoring agencies like Equifax and TransUnion can make mistakes," says Ryall. His girlfriend's credit score still reflected an old loan she had repaid long ago. And, as Ryall points out, every time some com-

pany does a credit check on you — for instance, when you're changing cell phone plans or if you move and have to set up services in the new location — it can negatively impact your credit score.

3. **Opting for a condo? Read the rules and regs thoroughly.** "I was surprised

at some of the fees implemented by my condo board," says personal finance blogger Barry Choi (moneywehave.com), who bought a condo last year with his wife Carla Salvosa.

"If we ever get locked out of our unit, we'll be charged to have the concierge let us back in," he says. "We'll also be charged if we

leave our car in its parking spot when they're power washing the garages." Although Choi and his wife haven't yet been dinged for anything, he says, "some of the fees listed still seem insane to me."

4. **Buying a new home? Think long term and upgrade the materials.** "We bought our house brand new from a builder," says Nancy Truman of Markham, Ont. I wish we had known to upgrade the materials used at the time."

Just 12 years on, Truman has already replaced the roof and the attic insulation. In addition, she says "the windows ice up and the garage door keeps falling apart."

5. **Give yourself time to get out of one home and into another.** Dan and Jasmine Young moved into their home in Toronto's east end in December. "We closed on our new house and old house on the same day," he says. "That meant we had to be out of one house and coordinate getting into the other all on the same day. It added a ton of stress on top of having a pregnant wife in her third trimester!"



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Play up the selling points and downplay the chore list

Vicky Sanderson

A booming real estate market doesn't reduce the benefits of hiring a stager. In fact, working with a professional can only add more value, says designer and stager Becky Freeman, because it results in even higher offers.

"As well, in a seller's market, you have to give buyers a reason for the high price," says Freeman, adding that her clients can typically expect a return on the cost of staging equal to between one and three per cent of the asking price.

DIY expert Leigh-Ann Allaire Perrault, who wrote a staging course curriculum for Sheridan College in Ontario, says the process should be seen as an investment rather than a cost. "If you give me \$5,000 and I give you \$20,000, where's the question?" she asks.

An effective stager brings fresh eyes to a property, adds Freeman. "People think their home is decorated perfectly, but often it has to be refined and decluttered — the analogy would be to a boutique hotel suite."

Both professionals say pre-showing organization is key. After visiting a site, Freeman creates a report for clients that details jobs to be done, with a clickable shopping list. She



Designer and stager Becky Freeman likens staging vacant homes and condos to "filling a blank space in a day or two." IRVIN SIDHU

can also connect homeowners with third-party experts, such as organizers and tradespeople.

Near the top of her to-do list is ensuring that there's a "purpose" for every room. "The buyer is looking and thinking, what can I use this room for? So every room must have a specific reason. You don't want two things going on in the same room, or to have undefined spaces."

Sellers often make the mis-

take of underestimating just how stressful the process will be, or how much work will need to be done. "One of my strengths is as an empathy coach, who understands it's not going to be easy. But I can explain the need to get rid of stuff, or store items, or do this or that in terms of how they will work as marketing tactics." To "sweeten" the news, Freeman always arrives at the first meeting with chocolate

in hand.

To reduce stress, stager Nella Deluca often suggests people go on vacation while she addresses the staging details, including one of her pet peeves — poorly scaled rugs. ("They should anchor the furniture, and not float!" she says firmly.)

Social media may play an increasingly important role in real estate marketing, but Allaire Perrault has a caveat. "It's easy to fake reality by adding

filters or shoot with an extra-wide lens to make something look bigger. But don't set people up to be disappointed! As with everything, under-promise and over deliver."

Deluca is all for homeowners doing renovations prior to listing, but reminds them it's not their chance to do a dream makeover. "They will want to do things they love that make the space very self-specific. That can make it challenging to sell.

Anything that's fixed should be neutral, not too ornate, and universally appealing."

Allaire Perrault agrees that decor matters when selling a home. "But you have to stage for all the senses," she adds. "If the floor squeaks and the stair rails wobble and the door handles are loose or sticky, each of those things goes on a buyer's subconscious chore list, and one that has costs attached to it."



+ EXTERIOR

Staging often focuses on the interior of a home, but DIY expert Leigh-Ann Allaire Perrault reminds sellers that prospective buyers will often drive by a house before touring it. "If the exterior doesn't capture them, they'll just keep going," she says.

Using social to help sell your house



Take advantage of real estate sites and social media platforms to boost exposure of your property listing. ISTOCK

Like many Toronto residents, Cayla Hochberg was optimistic about selling her home because of the lucrative market, but wanted to help spread the word of the new listing as much as possible.

And so she turned to social media.

"I shared the MLS listing on Facebook, and not only did people leave encouraging comments — like 'Beautiful home,' 'Great backyard,' and 'You shouldn't have any problems selling it' — they'll in turn share the listing with their circle of friends," says Hochberg. "The comments then turned to questions like 'What's the lot size?'"

The school teacher says her agent received a "great response" from the buzz generated online.

The home sold last month for well above asking price, though Hochberg concedes she's unaware if her Facebook posts were a contributing factor. "But you never know who will see your post."

Professionals agree

Lahav Reznik, broker and managing partner of Forest Hill Real Estate Vaughan, says posting a listing to social media not only helps spread awareness of your home, but can translate to a higher price, based on his experience.

"Studies tell us more than 94 per cent of people are looking for homes online, therefore you'll be missed if you're not there," says Reznik. "In a nutshell, not being present on social media could make a difference between sell-

ing at market value and selling it hundreds of thousands over market value."

"Even though we're in a crazy market right now, a 'for sale' sign on your lawn and a MLS listing just aren't enough. The more you're out there promoting the listing on Facebook and Instagram, the higher the probability of showings, the higher the probability of offers, and the higher probability of getting a higher price," says Reznik.

With social media, you're also opening up your listing to foreign buyers, adds Reznik. "It's more than just hitting your local market," he says, adding that having a website, along with a social media presence, is a good idea as some countries might block access to Facebook and

other platforms.

Tips on maximizing posts

The first tip, according to Reznik, is to ensure a social media post grabs someone's attention with an enticing headline and plenty of photos and perhaps videos, too.

"Have a catchy phrase that will make people want to tap or click on it, such as 'Rarely offered lot in highly desirable area' as an example," says Reznik. "High-resolution images are also a must as a marketing tool, such as a collage of pictures or good-looking videos."

Recording with a drone, aerial photos and videos of a property are also popular today, especially for estate homes, he adds.

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When what's on the outside really does count

STREET VIEW

Greenery, a coat of paint can make all the difference

Liz Bruckner

Whether you're preparing to sell or have just moved into a new home, stepping up your exterior game can make a huge difference in how inviting your home looks and feels.

According to Mara Schachter, principal at Mara Schachter Design, these are the strategic, impactful outdoor renovations worthy of your time.

Invest in landscaping

As subjective as landscaping can be, it's important not to overlook this area of your home's exterior.

"My advice is to keep it simple. A Versailles-like maze of boxwoods may look like beauty to some, but a burden to others," says Schachter.

To get the most crowd-pleasing effect, start by tidying scrappy garden beds, trim wayward plant tufts, cut back overgrown hedges, and lay sod or grass seed where needed.

"Think of creating a space with well-placed shrubbery, a green lawn, a well-lit entryway and an inviting front door," she says.

Consider replacing old windows and doors

Just because windows and doors function and keep out the cold/snow/rain doesn't mean they're well insulated or don't require maintenance. While they may not be falling apart or in dire need of replacement, Schachter says if you're considering updating, think of the benefits new versions offer.

"Beyond improving the aesthetics of a home, replacing old windows and doors provides functional benefits too — like less maintenance, better energy performance and even reduced street noise."

Trying to revamp these areas on a budget? Refreshing the paint on your front door and the trim surrounding windows can revive the look of your home's exterior.

For a complete overhaul, paint your brick

A little paint can go a long way in transforming the look of any home.

When giving your brick a facelift, first ascertain that it is in good condition (you may need a waterproof primer for more porous older bricks).

Determine the fixed elements — the existing brick or roof colour — and work from there, says Schachter. Keep the palette simple and consistent for the most dramatic effect, and use the best quality outdoor paints you can afford. "It's important to remember, as well, that exterior



Adding greenery and new lighting to a front porch makes an instant first impression. ISTOCK

colours need to be really toned down and have a flat finish because they intensify and look brighter in daylight on a house than they do on the colour card in the paint store."

She adds paint application may not be appropriate for every brick house, so it's best to consult a professional before you start the painting process.

Update your lighting

Bright, well-placed lights can do much to highlight your home's

architectural features and landscaping. Options are seemingly endless, so consider the role you want your lights to play — whether for safety or decorative purposes — before you buy.

"You want to make sure whatever lighting you choose has the right scale and proportion," Schachter says, "so the fixtures compliment the house's overall style."

Dress up your porch

Infusing your porch with per-



A few potted plants and a fresh coat of paint in a bold colour can change the look of your home from the outside. ISTOCK

sonality is an easy way to boost your home's outdoor style.

Re-paint or re-stain areas that need it, and consider adding new or updated columns and/or railings for added visual interest.

Incorporating aesthetically pleasing brackets and corbels are nice touches, as is revamping your porch ceiling. Add a fresh coat of paint, replace old bead board panels, if needed, and install a new light fixture and a few well-placed flowers or plants to complete the space.

Install shutters

Adding shutters is an easy way to boost your home's overall appeal. Look for options that are sized to cover windows when they're closed, paying attention to how and where they're installed.

"Over time, shutters have become more decorative than functional, but it's important that they still look like they could actually protect windows as they were originally meant to," says Schachter.

Shutters tend to look best on single windows — placing them beside double or triple variations doesn't look as authentic, she says — and while one pair can nicely boost your home's style, flanking them on every window isn't necessary.

And remember...

The most worthwhile investments depend on the state of your home and the homes in your neighbourhood, says Schachter.

"The most valuable renovation projects will differ from home to home because good design isn't just about how something looks, but also about how it works."

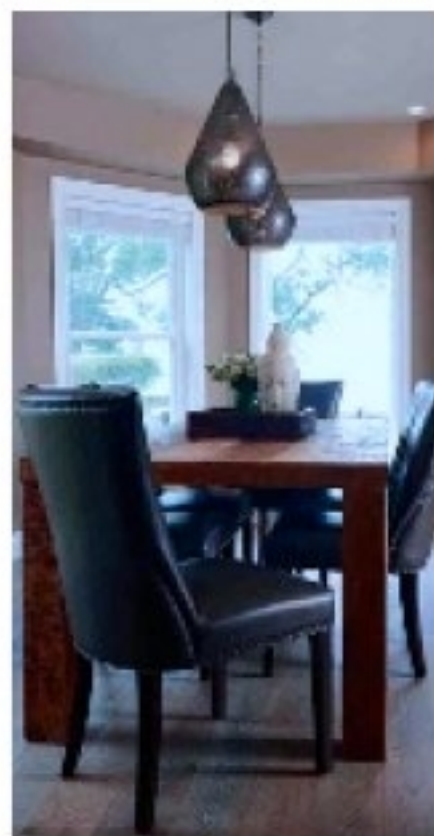
For example, replacing old windows and doors results in more than just a cleaner look; it also provides better energy performance, reduces hydro costs, and improves indoor comfort.

If you're going to stay in your house for the foreseeable future, spend now to save later.

Overhauling what lies just under your feet



A durable engineered hardwood floor by Torly's is used in an open concept kitchen and dining room. DANN TARDIF



Even if you're not prepared to fully gut, renovate and invest in an overhaul, upgrading your floors can do much to boost the style (and value) of your abode.

"I think floors are one of the most underappreciated aspects of a design project," says Lisa Canning, interior designer. "You can make so much impact in a room with flooring, from creating stunning patterns to elevating the architectural details in a space. They can almost be treated like a fifth wall in a room."

So which options are best? It's a trifecta of personal preference, material quality and considering the space you're overhauling, Canning says.

"There are advantages associated with each category of flooring, but it's important to select the variety with the style and functionality you're after."

In terms of hardwood, it's perennially popular with homeowners because it can be sanded and stained to whatever colour you like, is easily refinished as needed, adds to a home's value for a higher resale price and is truly customizable in terms of design. Its kryptonite, Canning says, is water, as it warps if moisture is left to pool for too long.

Engineered hardwood ex-

pands and contracts less than solid hardwood, making installation on all levels of a home easy. It's available in a variety of colours, finishes and species, and is more budget-friendly than solid hardwood. While it stands up to water damage better than hardwood — because the top layer of this type of flooring is made with a thin layer of wood veneer — sanding and refinishing is not possible. Premature warping or fading is also possible if the product is poorly made.

Laminate flooring's main selling feature is its cost-effective price point, easy installation, durable finish and that it's very resistant to moisture. Canning says its downfall is that it can look and feel artificial.

Ceramic, porcelain and stone tile are appealing, thanks to the

variety of design options. They also boost a home's resale value, are waterproof, stain-proof, low-maintenance and often are very budget-friendly. The drawbacks? There's a plethora of bland and boring options, says Canning, and tiles are cold on feet. Installation also tends to be labour-intensive, and therefore, expensive.

Carpeting uniquely offers softness and comfort underfoot, is affordable, covers uneven areas easily and offers soundproofing qualities in any given space. Its downfall is that it requires more rigorous cleaning in comparison to solid surfaces, says Canning.

She adds that, while any of the above options could potentially work in a space based on the design aesthetic you're after, there are a few expert-derived guidelines for the selection process.

Before you buy, consider:

Location: Basements often experience ground moisture, and kitchens and bathrooms are more likely to have issues with humidity and water damage, so it's paramount that the flooring material you choose is able to withstand these potential issues.

UV exposure: If the space you're

renovating has a steady amount of direct sun throughout the day, these rays can fade or even darken certain types of flooring. Keep this in mind before settling on a product.

In-floor heating: If you're planning on installing radiant heat, know that some materials aren't compatible with this feature. Speak to a flooring expert about which styles are ideal for your space.

Durability: Many people aren't aware that certain types of hardwood — bamboo among them — are notorious for being very brittle and difficult to work with, says Canning. Before you buy, research the type of wood you're considering and speak to your contractor about the wood moisture reading process before you move forward with installation.

Wood shade. Despite popular belief, going dark with your floors does not hide dirt, says Canning.

"I actually think it's the opposite. Dust, lint and other natural fibres show up pretty evidently against a dark stain or tile, so choose your dark finishes with caution." LIZ BRUCKNER

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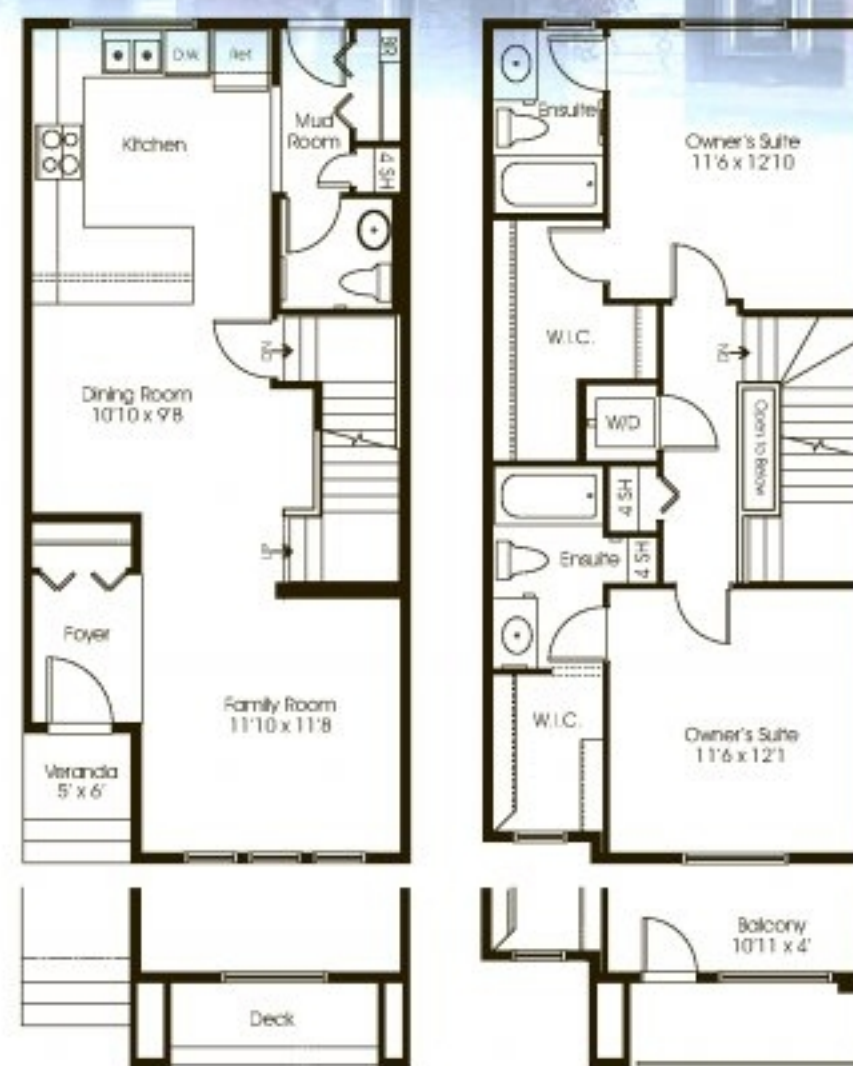
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CONTRIBUTED

TOWNHOME LIVING IN CALGARY'S NORTHEAST

If you're buying a new home, look for one that's low maintenance and still fits a family, with cleverly-thought-out design options that will give you the lifestyle you're looking for.

At Ashbury, a new townhome project in Calgary's North East set to be move-in-ready this summer, small details make a big difference.

The tall, nine-foot ceilings on the main living floor let plenty of natural light into every room. The open-concept floor plans create open large, inviting space whether you're working, playing or relaxing.

"Homes at Ashbury were designed with today's buyer in mind, who's looking for an open, flexible space that will adapt to their life now, and as they grow," says Kelsey Orvis, marketing coordinator for Genesis Builders Group, the builder of Ashbury Townhomes. "We're getting lots of interest from buyers from many different demographics, from single buyers to families — and that's a reflection of the high-quality, yet affordable living spaces we're offering."

"OUR DESIGN AND HOME BUILDING TEAMS HAVE GONE ABOVE AND BEYOND TO CREATE HOMES THAT FIT TODAY'S HOME BUYER."

— Kelsey Orvis, marketing coordinator for Genesis Builders Group

Buyers will have three home model options to choose from, now selling. The Garden Townhome is a two-storey stacked design with 838 square feet, starting from \$235,000. It has a loft feel with the bedroom on the upper level. The Courtyard Townhome is a three-storey stacked model. At 1,499 square feet, there's room to grow and includes a double attached garage starting at \$355,000. The Pond Townhome, a three-storey family home with 1,738 square feet of space, and a double attached garage starting from \$395,000. This model overlooks the pond that the site is situated next to.

At Ashbury, quality of life isn't just about looks. It's also about functionality and community. Every inch of space in your townhome will have a purpose. In the kitchen, you can enjoy clever storage solutions for your all your food and cooking supplies. In the bedrooms and living areas, you'll find spacious closets that help you store your belongings neatly.

The homes are just as functional as they are stylish, with low-E windows that help keep the heat inside. A high-efficiency furnace and natural gas hot water tank work together to help you save on your environmental footprint and your electricity bill.

"Our design and home building teams have gone above and beyond to create homes that fit today's home buyer," Orvis says.

Genesis is now offering your first year of possession free of condo fees. Pair that with staggered deposit options and owning a home just got easier. Take a virtual tour of the homes and see the difference for yourself at genesisbuilds.com.

A community you'll be proud to call home

Imagine arriving home on a workday to a street green with a mix of evergreens and lush foliage, leading up to your home with its distinctive design and traditional brick details.

You can visit outdoors with your neighbours, go out to eat at a nearby restaurant, or take an evening stroll along the walkways that weave throughout the neighbourhood.

At Ashbury Townhomes, a new development by Genesis Builders Group in the master-planned community of Saddlestone in northeast Calgary, you'll have it all.

Homes at Ashbury are a one-of-a-kind combination of affordable with a neighbourhood that was designed to foster a sense of community.

The paved walking paths in the neighbourhood lead to the local park, complete with pond, playground and kilometers of trails. It's the perfect place for your morning jog or a relaxing after-dinner walk.

Accessibility is a key aspect of this neighbourhood. Here you'll be walking distance to the LRT, restaurants and grocery stores. Safeway and Shoppers Drug Mart are just around the corner at Saddletowne Circle.

Home buyers with kids will appreciate the schooling options in the area, including a brand new elementary school.

There's plenty of entertainment in the area too. You can go skating or take lessons at Prairie Winds Park Rink or Coral Springs Lake Rink. Ashbury residents will also have easy access to the Genesis Centre recreation facility, the YMCA and Calgary Public Library.

If you're looking for a place to grab a pint, check out local watering holes Moonlight Pub, Sinbad's Eatery and Pub, Karaoke to Go, or Cowboy's Taphouse.

McKnight Village shopping centre is also close at hand. Pick up your groceries at Safeway and Calgary Produce Market, Fruiticana or OK General Food Store.

Or if you're not in the mood to cook dinner, you can dine in or get take-out instead from the many options nearby. Boston Pizza and Fritou Fried Chicken and Pizza offer family favourites around the corner. Or you can find a range of dishes from Original Joe's Restaurant and Bar, Cactus Club Café, Southern Spice of India, and more.

At the same time, you're 20 minutes from downtown Calgary, a quick morning commute, and the assurance that everything you need is a short trip away.

"It's a well-rounded, community-oriented neighborhood that has everything you need," says Orvis.



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Yuuuge on the links

GOLF

Trump extends his polarizing persona to the greens

Leave your ego in the clubhouse if you ever get the chance to golf with U.S. President Donald Trump. He may well throw shade on your game. And puff up his own.

Trump suggested to his good friend Phil Ruffin that maybe he should be hitting from the women's tees. Years ago, he repeatedly ribbed an AP golf writer after his drive didn't go as far as a female pro's. As president, he's even had the chutzpah to give grief to Ernie Els, who's playing in the Masters this week.

"He's very good at the needle," says Jim Herman, who was an assistant club pro at one of Trump's courses before Trump spotted his talent and helped him join the PGA Tour.

Since taking office, Trump has made it clear he has no qualms about spending quality time on the golf course even though he criticized former president Barack Obama relentlessly for doing the same.

This is one area, however, where the president's boasts are borne out by performance.

At age 70, the president still is a very good golfer, with a strong drive, quirky but effective putts and multiple holes-in-one and 19 club championships to his credit.

While he hasn't recorded scores for a while, his handicap was 2.9 last fall, better than the 3.5 for 77-year-old Jack Nicklaus, the 18-time major champion.

In his 10 weeks as president,



Donald Trump says he is using golf to help lubricate business and political pursuits.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS FILE

Trump has turned up at one or another of his 16 golf properties at least 17 times, spending more than 63 hours in all at different clubs.

But the White House, sensitive to accusations that it's hypocritical for Trump to golf a lot after criticizing Obama for doing just that, fizzes up exactly what the president is doing during all those hours at his clubs.

Trump is proud to say he uses his golf game to lubricate business and political pursuits.

As he tries to revive the effort to repeal health-care law, Trump

on Sunday invited Republican Sen. Rand Paul of Kentucky, who had opposed the latest plan, for a round of golf at his course in northern Virginia.

Paul said Monday that Trump likes to talk about "how we come together to get everybody on the same page, and he likes to do it through golf."

Trump made a point of golfing with Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe in February, using the golden driver that Abe had given him just days after the election. The two used the Florida outing to foster deeper relation-

ships in Asia, according to the White House.

Els, who was part of a foursome with Trump and Abe that weekend, says the talk wasn't all business.

"He was giving me grief about my game," Els said. "He's one of the boys. He didn't talk anything down on the ladies or anything like that, so that was nice."

As for making golf more accessible for people without deep pockets, Trump just doesn't want to go there.

He told the Golf Channel last year: "I'd like to see golf be an aspirational game, where you aspire to join a club someday. You want to play, you go out and you become successful."

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

“
He was giving me grief about my game.

Ernie Els, four-time major winner

Reporter recounts Trump's mocking

I played golf with Donald Trump in November 2002 when he was just a billionaire developer who loved golf.

Rounding out our pro-am foursome at Trump International in West Palm Beach, Fla., were Annika Sorenstam and Jim Palmer, the former Baltimore Orioles pitcher. At the time, Sorenstam was the best in the world, and Trump had made sure she was in his group.

Me? I was just along for the ride.

On the last hole, Sorenstam hit her tee shot about 10 yards

past mine, and that was all the future president, known for trash talk on the links, needed.

"Did you see how far she hit it past you? And you hit that one good!" he said mockingly.

"Yes, well, she is No. 1 in the world," I replied.

"Yeah, but you're a big, strong guy and she's 20 yards past you!"

The next day I was watching Sorenstam in the first round and when she missed a putt, I realized I was standing next to Trump.

"I hope we didn't ruin her

yesterday," I said.

He looked over, saw me and said, "Hey there! Man, I cannot believe how far she hit it past you on the 18th yesterday." That's when I knew he hadn't let it go.

Days later, when I was to interview him for a story on golf course development, he even wanted me to tell his employee who brought me to our meeting.

"Tell him how far Annika hit her drive past you," he said.

DOUG FERGUSON/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS



MASTERS

Johnson ailing after tumble down stairs

Masters favourite Dustin Johnson took a serious fall on a staircase Wednesday and injured his lower back, and his manager said it was uncertain whether the world's No. 1 golfer would be able to play.

It was a stunning development on an otherwise quiet day at Augusta National, where the course was shut down at 1:30 p.m. because of storms.

The real calamity struck a few hours later.

David Winkle, his manager at Hambric Sports, said Johnson fell on the stairs at the home he is renting in Augusta.

"He landed very hard on his lower back and is now resting, although quite uncomfortably," Winkle said in an email. "He has been advised to remain

immobile and begin a regimen of anti-inflammatory medication and icing, with the hope of being able to play tomorrow."

What might help Johnson is that he is in the last group for the opening

round, scheduled to tee off at 2:03 p.m. with two-time Masters champion Bubba Watson and PGA champion Jimmy Walker.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

“
I've got a lot of confidence in my game right now ... But, you know, anything can happen.

Dustin Johnson on Tuesday

NBA

Lowry boosts Raps to victory in return

Kyle Lowry had 27 points and 10 assists in his return from a wrist injury and the Toronto Raptors rallied to beat the Detroit Pistons 105-102 on Wednesday night.

Back in the lineup after missing 18 games, Lowry helped the Raptors overcome a 20-point first-half deficit. Toronto moved a half-game ahead of the Washington Wizards for third place in the East.

DeMar DeRozan had a double-double 12 points and 10 assists.

WEDNESDAY At Detroit

105 **102**
RAPTORS **PISTONS**

Ish Smith and Tobias Harris had 16 points each for Detroit.

The Pistons dropped to 11th in the conference, three games behind Miami, Chicago and Indiana with four games to play.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

IN BRIEF

Pens' Letang to undergo surgery on ailing neck

The Pittsburgh Penguins will head into the Stanley Cup playoffs without defenceman Kris Letang.

Letang is scheduled to undergo surgery to repair a herniated disk in his neck and will be out four to six months. The 29-year-old hasn't played since Feb. 21 for the defending champions.

The three-time all-star had five goals and 29 assists in 41 games for the Penguins.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Westbrook just misses record-setting triple-double

Russell Westbrook fell a rebound short of a historic triple-double, but he scored 45 points, including a late three-pointer that helped seal the Oklahoma City Thunder's 103-100 victory over the Memphis Grizzlies on Wednesday night.

Westbrook had 10 assists and nine rebounds, leaving him tied with Oscar Robertson's 55-year-old record for triple-doubles in a season with 41.

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Perfect Gushue fresh for playoffs

CURLING

Early wins for Canada's 9-0 skip are saving him ice time

The numbers are in Brad Gushue's favour at the Ford World Men's Curling Championship.

He posted impressive wins over Jaap Van Dorp of the Netherlands and Japan's Yusuke Morozumi on Wednesday to extend his unbeaten streak to nine games. Gushue has outscored his opponents 77-29 overall and games have been called early on seven occasions.

Each early finish will help Gushue and his team stay fresh for the playoffs. The St. John's skip, who has secured a berth in the Page playoff 1-2 game, is still bothered by a hip/groin injury so any saved throws are welcomed.

"It's a huge positive," Gushue said. "The less I can be on it the better, to be honest. At this point I don't need more reps or more volume. I feel comfortable with the ice and I feel comfortable with how I'm throwing it."

"So if I can keep the fatigue down and be ready come the weekend, that's a positive."

Gushue's 8-3 victory in the morning was followed by a 10-2 rout in the afternoon. Sweden's Niklas Edin improved to 7-1 with a 6-4 victory over Scotland's David Murdoch in the morning draw. Switzerland's Peter de Cruz was in third place entering Draw 13 with a 6-1 record.

Morozumi fell to 5-4 with the loss. Italy's Joel Retornaz and John Shuster of the United States, both idle in the morning, were tied in fifth place at 4-3.

China's Rui Liu (4-4) kept his slim playoff hopes alive by edging Norway's Steffen Walstad 7-6 in an extra end. The top four

teams will make the playoffs.

In the early game, Gushue opened with a three-point first end. Van Dorp was held to a single in the fourth and Gushue tacked on a deuce in the fifth end.

The Dutch side scored two points in the seventh but Gushue replied with a pair to wrap things up in eight ends. Against Japan, Gushue's five-point fourth end put the game out of reach. He iced it with a deuce in the seventh.

At least six ends must be played per game at this competition. Teams can decide to shake hands early if the game has turned into a rout. Gushue has posted two six-end wins and three seven-end victories so far.

By only going the regular 10-end length on two occasions in round-robin play, he has saved 21 ends overall — the equivalent of more than two games.

That's important for a team still feeling the effects of a long, tough grind at the Tim Hortons Brier.

"When we came in we weren't fully recovered," Gushue said. "So to have a few lighter games, it has certainly been a benefit."



Canada skip Brad Gushue makes a shot as lead Geoff Walke, left, and second Brett Gallant sweep during the 13th draw against Japan at the men's world curling championships in Edmonton on Wednesday. JONATHAN HAYWARD/THE CANADIAN PRESS

The 1-2 game between the first two seeds is set for Friday night. The winner will advance to Sunday's gold-medal game.

The Page 3-4 game between the third and fourth seeds will

be played Saturday afternoon. The winner advances to the evening semifinal and the loser will play for bronze Sunday against the semifinal loser.

Kevin Koe skipped Canada

to a gold medal at last year's world championship in Basel, Switzerland. Gushue beat Koe in the Brier final last month in St. John's.

THE CANADIAN PRESS



The less I can be on it the better, to be honest. At this point I don't need more reps or more volume.

Brad Gushue on his injury

IN BRIEF

Barca keep pressure on Real

With Luis Suarez and Lionel Messi on top form, Barcelona needed less than 10 minutes to take care of Sevilla and keep the pressure on Real Madrid in the Spanish league on Wednesday.

Suarez scored with a bicycle kick and Messi struck twice within the next eight minutes on his return to action as Barcelona eased to a 3-0 victory in its pursuit of a third straight league title.

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PREMIER LEAGUE

Leaders Chelsea beat City to get back on track

The symbol of Chelsea's collapse last season, Eden Hazard has spearheaded the revival under Antonio Conte.

With another two goals on Wednesday sealing a 2-1 victory over Manchester City, Hazard set the runaway leaders back on the winning track after a shock weekend setback.

Stamford Bridge now regularly rises to acclaim the winger who went missing in Chelsea's moments of despair last year and was branded a "rat" by fans who blamed him for Jose Mourinho's second reign

ending in acrimony.

With each goal — 12 and counting after Wednesday — and every moment he's shimmering across the field, Hazard has rekindled the love affair with the Chelsea faithful.

"He's an important player and also he's growing in his mentality," Conte said. "I think he's playing a really good season." It will surely end with a Premier League winner's medal to keep the one from 2014-15 company.

A shock loss to Crystal Palace on Saturday halted Chelsea's

+ RESULTS

Arsenal 3, West Ham 0
Hull City 4, M'brough 2
S'hampston 3 C. Palace 1
Swansea 1, Tottenham 3
Chelsea 2, Man. City 1
Liverpool 2, Bournemouth 2

serene path to the trophy, but normal service was resumed at Stamford Bridge to leave former title rival City with a fight just to hold onto fourth place.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS



Chelsea's Diego Costa heads a ball on Wednesday in London. GETTY IMAGES

IN BRIEF

Reigning IPL champions Sunrisers beat Challengers

Defending champions Hyderabad Sunrisers got the 10th edition of IPL rolling on Wednesday with a thumping 35-run victory over last year's finalists, Royal Challengers Bangalore.

Yuvraj Singh (62) and Australia's Moises Henriques (52) smashed half centuries as the home team reached an impressive total of 207-4.

Challengers were bowled out for 172 with Chris Gayle their top-scorer with 32.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Lynch visits Raiders as he considers a comeback

Retired running back Marshawn Lynch visited the Oakland Raiders on Wednesday as he decides whether to come back to the NFL and the team decides whether it wants to acquire the hometown favourite.

A person familiar with the visit says Lynch came to the facility to meet with Raiders officials. The person spoke on condition of anonymity because the visit wasn't announced by the team.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Amazon Prime scores NFL Thursday Night games

Amazon's new deal gives prime-time football a whole new meaning. The e-commerce powerhouse will stream NFL Thursday Night games this season via its Amazon Prime video service, replacing Twitter.

The live streams of the games will be available to the estimated 65 million members of Amazon Prime, which costs \$99 per year and also includes other perks like free videos, books and shipping.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Canadian weightlifter closer to gold after drug retests

Canada could be adding a second gold medal to its tally from the 2012 Olympics.

Weightlifter Christine Girard could jump from third place to first after the International Olympic Committee stripped Russia's Svetlana Tzaruksaeva of the silver medal after a positive substance test, the same fate of Maiya Maneza, who has already been stripped of her gold.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

MAKE IT TONIGHT

Hearty Carrot & Chickpea Stew



PHOTO: NANA VISNIE

Ceri Marsh & Laura Keogh
For Metro Canada

This fragrant, hearty stew makes more than enough for dinner, so you can pack leftovers for a tasty lunch tomorrow.

Ready in 1 hour 5 minutes

Prep time: 5 minutes

Cook time: 1 hour

Serves 6

Ingredients

- 1 medium onion, chopped
- 3 garlic cloves, minced
- 1 Tbsp minced ginger
- Tbsp olive oil
- 3 cups carrots, chopped in 1/4 inch rounds
- 1/2 tsp turmeric
- 3/4 tsp cinnamon
- 1 tsp chili powder
- 1 red pepper chopped
- 1/2 zucchini chopped
- 6 or 8 mushrooms chopped
- 2 cups of canned chick-

- peas, drained
- 1 cup chicken or vegetable stock

Directions

1. Sauté the onion, garlic and ginger in the olive oil until they're soft but not browned.
2. Add the carrots and the spices and a splash of stock to stop it from sticking.
3. Cook for 10 to 15 minutes, stirring occasionally.
4. Add the other vegetables and sauté for a couple of minutes.
5. Add the drained chick-peas and stock and simmer for an hour, stirring regularly.
6. Add salt and pepper to taste. Serve with a dollop of plain yogurt and some fresh cilantro.

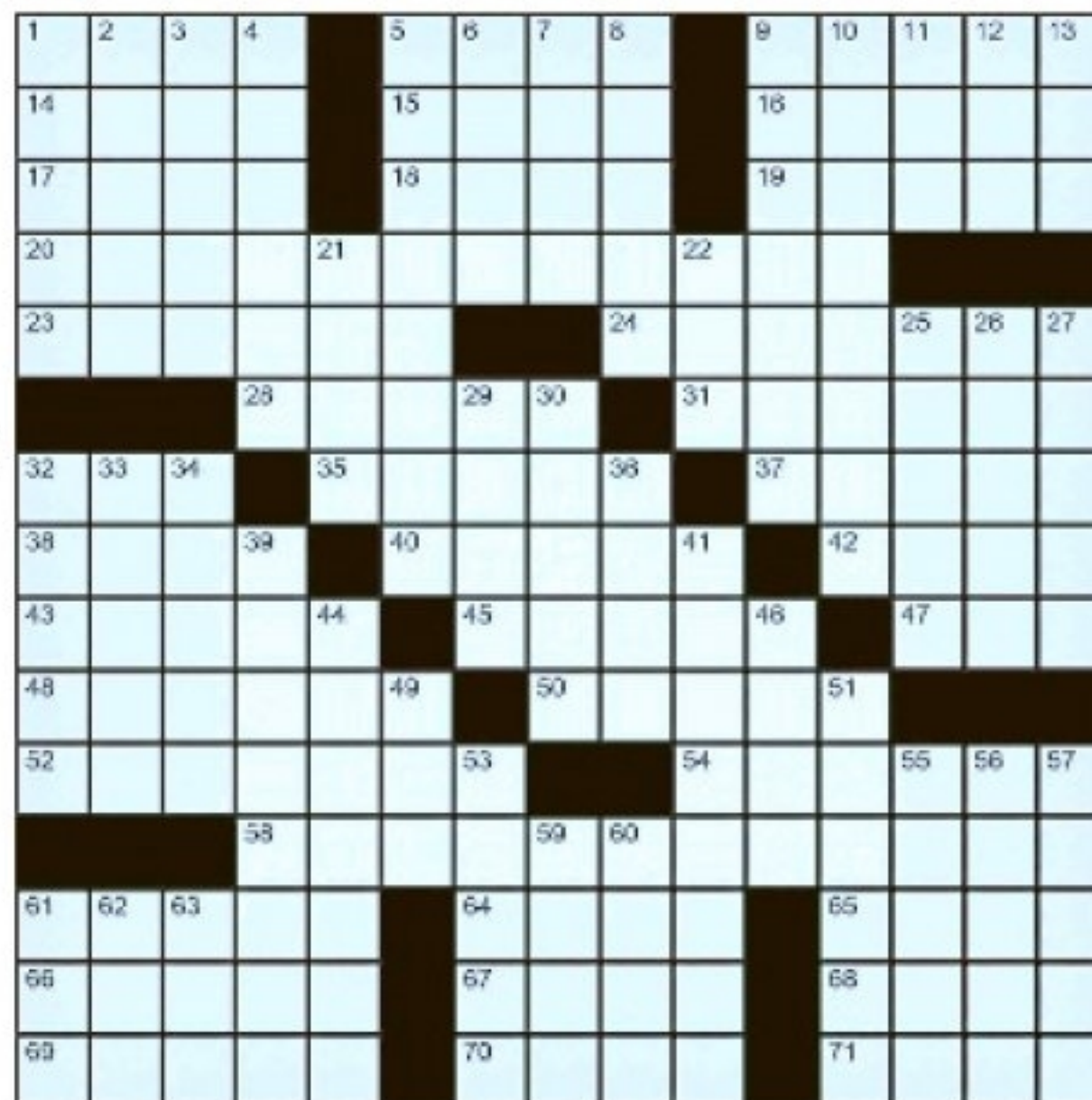
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CROSSWORD Canada Across and Down

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ACROSS

1. "Begone!"
5. Cinch
9. Treat at afternoon tea
14. Family-themed song by Paul Anka
15. Outfit for Octavian
16. Up ___ (Until this moment)
17. ___ the Terrible
18. Division
19. Surplus
20. Bruno Gerussi's starring role on "The Beachcombers": 2 wds.
23. Row of cookies in a bag
24. First ___ in Western Canada National Historic Site of Canada, it's something to 'gush' about in Alberta
28. Parts of doorbell-sounding duos
31. Particularly-pitiless person
32. Diamond official, for short
35. Look after the fire's logs
37. Work like Rosie did in World War II
38. Heathcliff's heathered haunt
40. Drink the water, as a puppy
42. Cancelled
43. Tim Hortons ___ (Curling championship)
45. Carnivals
47. Hankering
48. Rotten
50. News reporter's coup
52. Leeward Islands country, ___ and Barbuda



54. Pieces in the Phantom of the Opera's wardrobe
58. American inventor (b.1847 - d.1931) whose father was Canadian: 2 wds.
61. Noise a tomato makes when falling onto the kitchen floor

64. 'Chew' suffix (Like a stick of gum)
65. "My king."
66. On ___ (How some sandwiches are served)
67. Footnote abbr.
68. River on the Poland/Germany border
69. ___-turvy

70. Meshworks
71. Organized

DOWN

1. Revolves
2. Quibble
3. Speedily
4. What the turned-out-to-not-be-a-block-

- buster-movie did
5. University attendees
6. Reason for a "Tsk, tsk." utterance
7. Opposin'
8. Flagstones-created retreat
9. Thief
10. Rowing team

- helmsperson
11. Windsor, ___
12. ___easter
13. Hawaii's ___ Beach
21. Hertz competitor
22. Shadowy
25. Diplomatic representative
26. Vassal
27. Disclosed: 2 wds.
29. Fairway game
30. Arctic seabirds
32. Total eclipse phenomenon
33. "Joanie Loves Chachi" star Erin
34. Gist of a speech
36. Mr. Clapton
39. Piano performances
41. Takeaways from sales
44. Justifiedly
46. Hoped-for-word-in-bold on a real estate sign
49. Couplet
51. "Every Rose Has Its Thorn" band
53. At full force, poetically
55. "All kidding ___"
56. Seoul, South ___
57. Viking dog in the funny pages
59. Superior at a French monastery
60. Skirt feature
61. Was in session
62. ___ rata
63. Prune

IT'S ALL IN THE STARS Your daily horoscope by Francis Drake

Aries March 21 - April 20
You are pumped to explore social situations, playful times with children, the arts and sporting events today. You want to have fun, and you're ready for anything!

Taurus April 21 - May 21
Family discussions will be lively, inventive and original today. Listen to what other people bring to the table. Surprise company might drop by — stock the fridge.

Gemini May 22 - June 21
You're full of inventive, genius-like ideas today. This is why conversations with others will be lively and stimulating! Enjoy and learn whatever you can.

Cancer June 22 - July 23
Trust your moneymaking ideas, because you are capable of seeing new ways of doing things simply because you can think outside the box. Sometimes, that's all it takes.

Leo July 24 - Aug. 23
For most of this day, the Moon is in your sign, dancing with wild and wacky Uranus. This helps you to be inventive and spontaneous. Just go with the flow!

Virgo Aug. 24 - Sept. 23
You might be privately excited about something today, because you see new ways of doing things. The trick is, will others agree with you? Why not find out?

Libra Sept. 24 - Oct. 23
You might meet a real character today. This also is a good day to hang out with friends and explore fresh activities. Don't be afraid to take a chance on something new.

Scorpio Oct. 24 - Nov. 22
People admire you today. They see you as someone who is a leader and who is full of innovative ideas. Likewise, your boss or parent also might have a new way of looking at things.

Sagittarius Nov. 23 - Dec. 21
Travel plans suddenly might fall in your lap today. Alternatively, scheduled travel might be canceled or delayed. Anything can happen.

Capricorn Dec. 22 - Jan. 20
Check your bank account and anything to do with shared property, because a few surprises await you today. Make sure you know what's going on.

Aquarius Jan. 21 - Feb. 19
A friend or partner might surprise you today by suggesting something out of the blue. Stay light on your feet so that you can play ball.

Pisces Feb. 20 - March 20
This is a good day to introduce reform and improvements to your job or possibly to your health. That's because you are full of original, inventive ideas. Trust your thinking process.

CONCEPTIS SUDOKU by Dave Green

Every row, column and box contains 1-9



YESTERDAY'S ANSWERS

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